

AMBASSADOR ROBERT E. BARBOUR

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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[Note: This transcript was not edited by Ambassador Barbour.]

Q: Could you give me information about yourself? When and where you were born, a bit about your upbringing and education.

BARBOUR: I was born in Lakewood, Ohio, in December of 1927, but moved to Memphis, Tennessee, when I was eight years old. My formation is really southern. I went to grammar school, junior high school, high school, in Memphis, Tennessee, and then to the University of Tennessee. So despite my accent I am at heart really a southerner.

In the summer of 1943 I read a book called Diplomatically Speaking, by a man named Lloyd C. Griscom, which convinced me that the only thing I ever wanted to do in life was to be in the United States Foreign Service. Although there were some shadings of that resolve, that determination and interest persisted; and it is in fact true that I have never wanted to be anything other than a Foreign Service officer. That made life much easier than it otherwise might have been as a student because, among my schoolmates, I always had a clear fix on what I wanted at a time when most of them were floundering around and had an interest, you might say the opposite of mine, to make money. I wanted to be in the Foreign Service, and have been very lucky in that sense to have had a career that has spanned forty-two years.

Q: You graduated from the University of Tennessee when?

BARBOUR: In December of 1948, then came to Washington and enrolled in George Washington University to fill in a lot of gaps that I knew I had in my education. I went to school at night and got a job working as a researcher, which was a file clerk of sorts, in the Passport Division in the Winder (?) building. Though there is no plaque on it today, it was in fact the Union Army headquarters during the Civil War. I guess when I worked there in 1949 it still bore some resemblance to the building of that time. It was the end of the telegraph line and was where Lincoln used to go to read the incoming messages. That made it fun.

Q: What was the atmosphere there at that time? Ruth Shipley was very much in command.

BARBOUR: One hundred and fifty percent in charge of not just the Passport Division but of passports. She determined to a large degree who got passports and who didn't. Passports were not automatic because there was a fairly substantial network of legislation that determined who could not have passports. And, of course, nationality was rather complicated too, depending on the number of years, if you were an immigrant, you had spent in your country of origin, and so forth. Then you had people surreptitiously going to Israel to serve in what is today the Israeli armed forces but was then Palestine, and British. You had people whose presence abroad was undesirable for one reason or another. She could rule on all those things, subject to appeal, of course, but her rule was rather firm. I, needless to say, was not a party to any of those high level decisions. I was a clerk and I dutifully went down and got old files out of the passport files and attached them to new applications and delivered them to the examiners.

Q: I was told that it was sort of a rat infested cellar down there.

BARBOUR: The rats only came out in the night time; I worked in the day time and went to school at night studying commercial law, American diplomatic history and international economics.

Q: How long did stay doing that before you moved on?

BARBOUR: Only one semester. In the summer of 1949 I was offered a job as a clerk. Foreign Service Clerk was my title and I was sent off to Basra, Iraq.

Q: What was the situation like in Basra in those days?

BARBOUR: Basra was a remote and exotic city, the seaport of Iraq, on the fringes of a region that was coming to life in the petroleum business-lots of exploration going on. It was a date growing regional center, in many ways very traditional, very Shia, and very interesting. Our consular district included not just southern Iraq but the Sheikhdom of Kuwait, and, informally for emergency consular services, southern Iran as well. We had six Americans in the consulate and we had a Chris Craft cabin cruiser that we used not only for recreational purposes but to carry pouches and things down to ships that would take them back to the United States. If the city was remote and exotic, the consulate was also remote, and exotic in the sense that we lived and worked in an old Turkish palace. The offices were downstairs and the male members of the consular staff had a mess upstairs that included the principal officer, the two vice-consuls and me, with one of whom I shared a room-something unthinkable today.

Q: Who was the principal officer?

BARBOUR: Clifton P. English.

Q: Was John Jova there at the time?

BARBOUR: John Jova had gone; he left about a year before I got there.

Q: Were there any problems with the Iraqis in those days?

BARBOUR: Not many, and if there were, we in Basra were not involved in them. We were a consular and economic reporting post; we reported on date shipments, on oil exploration activities in the entire area. There was no political activity that I recall and I spent lots of hours doing our telegrams.

Q: What were you using, basically the one-time pad method?

BARBOUR: We used the OTP but we still had other forms; we had some old strips and once in a while we would even use a code book because it was cheaper. Our telegrams, by the way, would arrive in five letter groups written by hand from the local telegraph office. We got a carbon copy so occasionally we would have to go back to the post office and ask them to check and see what the particular letter was.

Q: You left there when?

BARBOUR: I left in September of 1950, after scarcely a year, to come back to Washington to participate in an intern program. The intern program, which was a very good deal for people in my situation, was really oriented toward developing senior civil service administrators for the Department of State. It was, nonetheless, an extremely good experience even though I had no intention whatsoever of going into the civil service. One of the great benefits for me was that among our three rotating assignments I was assigned for three months to the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, working as the staff assistant to Dean Rusk and his one Deputy Assistant Secretary, Livingston Merchant. It was a fascinating period and at the end of my year of internship I went back there, in the same position, for another six months or so. It was the time when the Korean War was going on and Dean Rusk was very closely involved with Dean Acheson, obviously shared his confidence, spent a lot of time with him. And of course the relationship between the department and the White House, the Secretary of State and the President, was very special at that time. Dean Acheson was the Secretary of State in every sense of the word and the Department of State ran the political side of the Korean War.

Q: What was your impression of Dean Rusk? This was when he was Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs.

BARBOUR: He was quick, he was articulate, he was a quick study, obviously. He was also, as far as I was concerned, friendly- somewhat aloof given the nature of his circumstances and mine-always pleasant. What impressed me was his intimate relationship with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of State's intimate relationship with the President. The most delicate aspects were delegated by Acheson to Rusk; for example, the dismissal of General MacArthur. It was obvious that there was trouble in that area from the number of remarks that either Rusk or Merchant made, and then he began to spend an increasing amount of time at Blair House.

Q: President Truman was living at Blair House at the time.

BARBOUR: The White House was under reconstruction. One morning he came in and handed me a letter, sealed, and told me to take it to National Airport and give it to the Secretary of the Army, Frank Pace, who was leaving that morning. He said, "Give it to no one but him; he will know what it is." So I dutifully did and realized later on that it was a letter of instructions to him for his meeting with General MacArthur.

Q: This was a very famous-the matter of timing became quite an issue of history later on as far as Pace's mission to MacArthur.

BARBOUR: That letter was, I suppose, written by Rusk, signed by the Secretary and given to Pace. Then followed another speech, an interview, and Rusk disappeared one afternoon and stayed at a long meeting at Blair House until two or three o'clock in the morning as I recall. Then he came in in the morning with his briefcase, put it in the top drawer of his safe and announced to everybody in the room, "This is out of bounds." Obviously the decision had been made and they were in the process of formulating it. The decision was announced, I think, that night-the following night-and there was a good deal of turmoil and excitement in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, as you might imagine. My association with it was, you might say, one of distant and amazed observation.

Q: What was the feeling of the people in the Far Eastern Bureau, as you saw it as the "fly on the wall", dealing with MacArthur?

BARBOUR: That, as I recall, he was less and less responsive to his orders. That, for whatever reason, personal ambition or a totally different concept of how the military operation should be run, he was giving it more and more of his imprint. I recall distinctly people feeling that it was getting dangerous.

Q: Livingston Merchant was a major player at that time but even more so in the Dulles period. How did you find Livingston Merchant in working with him and seeing him in operation?

BARBOUR: He was, as I said, the sole deputy, which is amusing today when we think of an Assistant Secretary with five deputies. He was the Deputy Assistant Secretary. He did all the things that Rusk was not personally involved in, was an able second, was much more available to us, we dealt more with him. He was always, no matter how preoccupied, available and I never hesitated to go in and ask him questions, and he always had time to answer-something I would have never dared do with Dean Rusk.

Q: To get a little feel for the attitude of the Department, did the entrance of China into the Korean War come as a sudden shock or was it becoming more and more apparent? What was the feeling toward China that you were absorbing?

BARBOUR: Great preoccupation, great preoccupation. I think one of the problems with MacArthur was the feeling that he was going to provoke them even more so, he was proposing the use of nuclear weapons and things like that. Then they had the Chinese onslaughts across the Yalu.

Q: This was in the winter of 1950-1951.

BARBOUR: Yes. Also during that period we began to move toward a peace treaty with Japan. That was given to John Foster Dulles, a distinguished Republican, who had a very, very small staff. Obviously one of the hopes was to end the Japanese problem in order to concentrate more on Korea and to deal with that in a positive way. John Foster Dulles and his sole aide, John Allison, then began to work separately on the Japanese Peace Treaty; did all the work themselves. I remember, apropos of China-this would be about the summer of 1951-there came a long telegram addressed to the President from Mao Zedong. Most unusual; I think the only one we ever received from him; it came over international telex. The first question was whether we should even receive it. The answer to that was that we already had it. We sent it to the President and he sent it back to Acheson who sent it down to Rusk with a lot of annotations on it, the only one of which I remember was various notations of "mousy dung", exclamation point, from the President. China was a pariah, obviously, and a pariah that caused us enormous concern.

Q: When did you move from Far Eastern Affairs?

BARBOUR: I should add that one Saturday morning in the middle of that summer of 1951, Dean Rusk came in and figuratively, if not physically, took me by the scruff of the neck and said, "Come with me." I really had no idea why. Out we went and down the corridor and he said, "I am taking you down to see Foster Dulles." This was all new to me; we went into the suite where Dulles was working, in the outer room sat his secretary, Bernita O'Day, in the inner room was Dulles, across the hall and down a bit was John Allison. That was it as I recall. We went in and Rusk said, "Foster, I have brought your new staff assistant." That was how I learned my relationship to Mr. Dulles. He said that was fine and here's what I want, that sort of thing, as Rusk and I stood there. As we went out, after that brief interview, he said, "Come on Monday." His secretary looked up at Rusk and said, "We don't need a staff assistant," which was a lovely way to begin. But we later became great friends and she was extremely helpful to me. I worked in there with him for about four months. Actually that Saturday was the day the Russians announced they would attend, which changed the conference entirely.

Q: What was your impression of John Foster Dulles when working for him?

BARBOUR: The four or five months that I was with him were not enough to develop a personal relationship with him, especially with a personality like his which was friendly but distant. Very difficult to get close to; there was no degree of intimacy. I worked with him and did as he asked, the usual things staff assistants do-screening papers, writing notes, errands. I had no substantive role with him at all. As a personality he was very much one of the major figures of the Department of State, certainly in his own opinion. In fact, he made more than the Secretary of State as I recall.

Q: What about John Allison, later Ambassador to Japan?

BARBOUR: I later worked for him when he was Ambassador to Japan. He had a reputation of being irascible, mercurial, and very difficult. He was an intellectual, a collector of first editions; in fact had a lively sense of humor and was a very interesting person. After the election I moved...

Q: This was the election of 1952?

BARBOUR: It couldn't have been. I guess Rusk left-yes, Rusk left and went to be President of the Rockefeller Foundation, there was no election. Dulles left the Department shortly after the treaty was signed in San Francisco; Allison became Assistant Secretary and I went back to the Bureau and worked for him for a while and found him prickly and irascible. But I didn't stay very long, about a month later I left to go to Japan. It wasn't until later when I worked for him, a prospect I faced with a good deal of trepidation, that my opinion changed and I realized indeed that he was not only very competent but a person of great intellectual depth, an excellent writer and had a very good sense of humor.

Q: What was your position at the time? You were, at whatever level, around the high and mighty. Something an ambitious Foreign Service Officer, even mid-career, would kill for.

BARBOUR: I was twenty-three when most of this was going on. It is a question of being in the right place at the right time, I suppose, as on that Saturday morning when Rusk said, "Come with me." I was an FSS-13, earning the princely sum of \$2970 per year.

Q: Even then that was not a good salary.

BARBOUR: That was the beginning salary. I was from time to time still going to GW, taking a course or two at night.

Q: Then you went back to the Far Eastern Bureau for a while...

BARBOUR: For a while and then I managed to get an attractive job in Tokyo.

Q: Again as a staff officer?

BARBOUR: No, as a staff officer to the administrative officer. This was when my FSS-12, which was only one rank above the clerical bottom, came into play. I went there as sort of a special assistant to the administrative officer because we were changing-the peace treaty was signed and would come into effect on April 29, I think-from the diplomatic section of SCAP (Supreme Commander Allied Powers-General MacArthur most of the time, by that time it was General Ridgway) to an Embassy. Japan was going to cease being an occupied country and become an independent country. We were building up the Embassy in anticipation of that changeover and I went out to be administrative assistant to the administrative officer. Which was fun; it was a very good place because we had a big administrative section and a high powered administrative officer and indeed I was his executive assistant. I don't know what we would call that today, probably it doesn't exist, we are not rich enough for it anymore. The new Ambassador announced was Robert Murphy, who was due to arrive on April 29th, the very day of the changeover. We had in that diplomatic section the protocol office which handled the commanding general's relations with all the Embassies which more or less came under him, at least theoretically.

One evening, I think the day the Ambassador arrived, there was a welcoming reception for him, by us, by the staff, and I remember vividly standing up there minding my own business, quietly, unobtrusively, as was appropriate to my station, when the personnel officer came over to me and said, "I suppose you know that you are going to be the new Ambassador's protocol officer?" Again lightning had struck; I was stunned, I was terrified. I didn't think that was a great thing at all, I knew nothing about it. This was because the protocol officer who had been in the diplomatic section before was leaving; he was a master, he knew everything, everybody, and I was to take his place! And, of course, Robert Murphy was an intimidating individual; he came there with his record of association with Harold Macmillan and Dwight Eisenhower and Mark Clark during the Second World War; he had been Ambassador to Belgium and he was a kind of diplomat of a type that you see very rarely now. I don't want to sound nostalgic, but his concept of the United States was embodied in him as an Ambassador and he represented the President of the United States and the United States in the broadest and strongest sense. I realize now that the reason he was sent there, given his strong personality-I guess his Irish temper-and his military background, was to make the transition. To see that Japan emerged from occupation and that the military role in the day to day life was changed dramatically.

Q: We are talking about the American military which had been ruling very nicely and happily for quite a while; to suddenly become subservient to an Embassy would be a major problem.

BARBOUR: It was difficult. Mark Clark came out as the new commander and at that time, of course, the Korean War was going on and the United Nations Command was located in Tokyo. The Supreme Command remained in Tokyo, the far east air force remained out at Haneda Airport, the navy was in ..?.. So they had a genuine problem of schizophrenia themselves; by and large they tried, but of course under the previous regime Embassy personnel had been military. We were all given ranks. When I arrived I was taken to the Iesu Hotel, a company grade billet, where I shared a hotel room with four other people-two permanent and two temporary beds for people who came over on R&R from Korea. It was a wild existence and it wasn't all surprising to see in our common bathrooms little Japanese girls coming and going and taking their showers too. It was an interesting time. Places were still off limits, there were things that civilian employees of the military could not do. But of course that no longer applied to us and one of the problems was asserting our individual independence vis-a-vis the military-we were no longer under MP's, for example. It was a time of transition, from great things like the role of the Prime Minister to little things about who gives traffic tickets. And Murphy, I am sure, was sent there to effect that transition.

Q: As a protocol officer did you have much contact with Murphy?

BARBOUR: Oh, constant; I moved up into his office. I was today what we would call a staff aide and that meant I had an intimate relationship with him. I was also an ADC, I traveled every place with him. We didn't get all that many visitors to the Embassy and I was sort of the permanent control officer for all Congressional delegations. I did all of his guest lists, his seating charts and things like that. I had all the relations with the Foreign Minister's office, the Prime Minister's office, and the Imperial Household. If he wanted to see the Emperor, for example, which wasn't very often, or if he wanted to take a distinguished visitor like Adlai Stevenson over to see him-which he really didn't want to do all that much but he knew he should-I would call and make the arrangements with my contact, Baron Matsui, I think it was, in the Imperial Household. A lovely man. We would say things like, "The Ambassador is wondering whether His Imperial Majesty might receive Mr. So-and-so." We would get a telegram of instructions requesting that, and I would say, "Of course if it is not convenient we would understand," and it would never happen. Or we might say, "We hope it might be possible," and he would work it in. Obviously I wasn't making these things up, they were all on Murphy's guidance.

I remember one issue that came up which emphasizes Murphy's role. Some months after the end of the occupation the American Army in effect kidnaped a Japanese national. A very mysterious business, I am not really sure what the ins and outs were; he had a clandestine relationship, was involved in things he shouldn't have been doing; I think he was probably a double agent. Anyhow, they kidnaped him and there was a great stew in the press about what has happened to So-and-so. Nobody knew. Finally it turned out that we had him and had been holding him all this time. Murphy summoned, summoned the chief of staff, a three star general, and explained to him in terms we could hear in the outer office why that was not possible, why it was a stupid thing to do. Of course the general knew it. Murphy's relationship with Clark was a factor but also his own concept of the United States and the way it does things, how you effect a transition from an occupied country to a free country that is going to be extremely important to us. This was an example of the kind of thing that he did.

Q: Murphy had been the American consul general in Algiers.

BARBOUR: He was political advisor in that capacity and then he went with Clark through Italy as his political advisor.

Q: He had also met Clark in Algiers in a clandestine meeting. Clark came by submarine before the landings. So they had a long relationship. As protocol officer did you find yourself trying to hold back, trying to keep the Embassy from leaning too hard on the Japanese so as to get them back in the mainstream, not subservient as before?

BARBOUR: We treated them with complete normality from our standpoint. Murphy knew how to play the game. The Japanese certainly knew how to play the game of diplomacy. We observed all the forms, all the proprieties and carried on a regular day to day business with them at all levels. Murphy played golf with the Foreign Minister, Okasaki, usually once a week. He spent a lot of time with the Prime Minister, Yoshida. The Embassy was developing its own contacts throughout the government, working relations and things like that, in a very normal way. And looking back on it now I realize that this was the way it was done. One of the problems I mentioned was the legitimate difficulty of the military, psychologically, to readjust. They did. I think they did it, certainly at the top, with total good faith and good will. But it was difficult because they were still a very senior command fighting a war next door. There were some problems from the business community, many of whom had lived in China, many of whom had moved to Japan and prospered under the occupation and found it difficult to adjust suddenly to the Japanese way of doing things. Some did, some didn't; those who didn't used to act in ways that showed they wished things had not changed; there was a carpetbagger mentality on their part.

Q: I saw a little of this. I was at one point a member of the occupying forces in Japan as an enlisted man in the air force in 1952 or so, then all of a sudden I found myself part of a defense ally as it reverted to a normal relationship. I could see that it was difficult for some of the military not to keep their preeminence.

BARBOUR: In many, many ways. Landlords, for example, whose houses had been requisitioned suddenly wanted them back and had a right to get them back.

Q: Were you there when the truce came in Korea?

BARBOUR: In July of 1953. Yes, but I was back in Washington taking my oral exams.

Q: So you had applied for the Foreign Service?

BARBOUR: I took my exams in Tokyo in 1952.

Q: It was the old three and a half day exam and then you went back to take your orals?

BARBOUR: I hitched a ride with an Assistant Secretary of State, Walter Robertson, who had been out to see Syngman Rhee.

Q: Did you have any chance at all to talk to him?

BARBOUR: Oh, yes.

Q: He was, I am told, a courteous southern gentleman and at the same time Mr."don't mess with China" personified.

BARBOUR: My relationship was more or less limited to that flight, at least my initial relationship. He was a very courteous Richmond gentleman, as you say. We had a lot of fun on the way back; he was very relaxed and I was hitching a free ride since at that time there was no other way to take the examination except to go back to Washington and do it. And I was here when the Armistice was announced.

Q: What was your oral examination like? You took it in 1953.

BARBOUR: In July of 1953. It lasted about an hour and a half; there were, I think, five people, one from the Department of Commerce, the others from the Department of State, none of whom I knew. It was initially personal and then we got on to my academic activities, which in high school were terrible and they knew it. They asked me questions about why I had done so poorly in this subject and that subject. I said that except for English literature where I had an acknowledged weakness, I didn't regret it because I had made up for it in college. They smiled and that was very reassuring. Then we talked about the Foreign Service and the implementation of policy. "Did I think the regional high commissioner was a good idea?" That had been discussed in the Ambassador's staff meeting and I had an answer already to go. "What did I think about personnel administration?" That had been discussed in the Ambassador's staff meeting. I had all kinds of information and that helped a lot. Someone had told me in the Embassy, "Make them smile, make them laugh." It turned out very well.

Q: How did your career progress here? You went back to Japan?

BARBOUR: I went back to Japan, back to my job with, by then, Ambassador Allison and stayed another year with him in the same role I had had with Murphy.

Q: Did you find a difference between Murphy and Allison as far as dealing with the Japanese?

BARBOUR: Allison was perforce much closer to them; he had been in Japan before the war, he spoke Japanese and he had been interned by them. So he had a much more personal interest in developing relations with Japan and used to get very upset with people who made his life complicated. I never saw that very much with Murphy.

Q: Then you came back to Washington, to the Department for a year or so?

BARBOUR: I came back to Washington in the late summer of 1954 and went into a Southeast Asia language and area program at the Georgetown Institute of Languages and Linguistics on Massachusetts Avenue, that I guess no longer exists, and spent about seven months studying Vietnamese.

Q: This was Dien Bien Phu time?

BARBOUR: Dien Bien Phu was earlier, when I was in the Bureau. This was after the Geneva Conference of 1955, when the French in effect pulled out and divided the country at the 17th parallel.

Q: So did you have a choice in the matter?

BARBOUR: I had a choice. I certainly didn't want to go into a strictly Vietnamese language program; there was no one else, I was to be the first. Having been in Japan where we had an extensive and extremely good language program, the idea was interesting; moreover, it was a way to get out of administrative and get into political. So it was explained by the Dean over there that this was an area program that encompassed at least two languages and the whole area from Burma and Indonesia through Indochina, and no one had done it yet.

Q: You were the first Vietnamese language officer?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: I don't imagine at the time that you thought you might be the beginning of a whole wave of people.

BARBOUR: No. It was fun; I had about six months here and then another three months on my own in Saigon. The way the language students had done it in Japan.

Q: You said two languages. What was the other one?

BARBOUR: The other one that was offered later on and declined on my behalf before I knew it, was Thai.

Q: How did you find the language?

BARBOUR: Extremely difficult. We spent our first thirty days or six weeks doing nothing but singing tones, there were three of us in the class. And we sang tones with our southern instructors, that is all, the first month before we put anything together. The vowels are as difficult as the tones. You have to develop a totally different way of thinking.

Q: I took just about two weeks of Vietnamese as an introduction and I found it absolutely impossible. I couldn't tell the difference between words with different tones.

BARBOUR: We transmit emotions by tones, they transmit meanings.

Q: Could we talk a little about your activities as a trainee and the situation in Saigon when you arrived there as a trainee?

BARBOUR: My wife and I arrived in Saigon on double ten, 1955, after a twenty-three day ship trip from the United States. This was after the Geneva Conference. In any case, South Vietnam, the Republic of Vietnam, was a new country and I was in a new field. As for the language study aspects, I tried to follow the pattern I had seen in Japan for the language students there. There was an organized school and an organized program. We had neither in Saigon, but I had no duties in the Embassy. It was understood that I would not work in the Embassy. I had money for tutors; the USIS people helped me find some, I interviewed them and established a regular regime of classes with tutors and then spent a number of hours each week on my own, wandering around in Saigon and, whenever I chose, outside. It was a quiet period, probably the beginning of the best period in Vietnam's life. Someone once referred to it as the golden age; anyway you could do anything you wanted, go anyplace by any means. They had public transportation, trains down to the south. I took a train once down to Can Tho, found a place to stay, wandered around town, struck up a conversation with some army officers. This was the sort of thing I thought one was to do, wander around Saigon. It was fun and added to that was the regular course of studies with my tutors, both spoken and written. That lasted about two months and then the Ambassador asked if we would like to take up residence in his house in Da Lat, which was up in the highlands.

Q: Sort of the Switzerland of Vietnam.

BARBOUR: Exactly. And during the period of Bao Dai, the Emperor, that was his summer capital. The United States owned up there a large, Charles Adams type, Victorian mansion on a hillside.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BARBOUR: Frederick Reinhardt, Fritz Reinhardt. Since he and his family wanted to go up for Christmas, they wanted someone to go up and get the house not so much cleaned as organized. There was a permanent staff of servants and there were all kinds of problems. Needless to say we said we would do that service and off we went. The missionaries helped me find some tutors and I reembarked on a program of regular study, in very pleasant circumstances. All that time in Saigon my wife and I had been living in Room 333 at the Majestic Hotel. At the end of that three months of formal study, we applied for and were authorized to take a regional study tour. So we went off, the two of us, to Singapore, up through Singapore to Malacca, Bangkok and back. Shortly after we arrived back the Department sent me off to be an observer to a university sponsored regional studies program in Rangoon. That was the extent of my studies program. I started to work in the Embassy in January, 1956.

The situation in Vietnam: it was the dawn of a new era for us; there was real enthusiasm of various kinds. The country was in the process of creating its new institutions; it was writing a constitution, it was creating a parliament, it was preparing to elect a chief of state. We were optimistic, enthusiastic. We were convinced the country had economic potential if we could develop the rice export industry. Needless to say, underlying it all, was the fact that we were the non-colonialists. The French had tried to deal with the country as a colony and had harvested the inevitable fruits-failure, disgrace. We were democrats, we were going to show this country; we were going to teach this country democracy, one way or another we were going to teach it democracy; it was going to be democratic and it was going to be a success. It was a period of that kind of attitude. It was genuine; we really thought we had a chance of turning this little country into a prosperous democracy.

Q: What were you doing at the Embassy?

BARBOUR: I moved into the Embassy as the junior officer in the political section, the only one who could speak or read or write Vietnamese. I was sort of given political grunt work. We got a copy of the constitution and I translated it. I read the newspapers and did a little press summary for the Ambassador every morning. I would get out and talk to people. One of the first things I wrote was a series of dispatches on the developing election campaign. That sort of thing-basic political reporting.

Q: How much interest was there back in Washington?

BARBOUR: I personally never got any feedback, but I got a lot of encouragement from my bosses. The Ambassador, a professional, his deputy and the head of the political section and his deputy were all very supportive and encouraging.

Q: Who were they?

BARBOUR: Fritz Reinhardt was the Ambassador, Dan Anderson was the Deputy Chief of Mission, Frank Malloy was the head of the political section and his deputy was John McKesson. Anything I wanted to do they thought was fine, they would be glad to have. They would steer me, give me guidance which I badly needed. John McKesson, in particular, was an outstanding writer; he had a very graceful flowing style, could accomplish a lot with few words; he was a profound and beneficial influence.

Q: What was our view of the government? Diem was...

BARBOUR: Diem was to be the hero. I am sure the Ambassador had no illusions about problems and attitudes, things like that, but we were optimistic. I remember in particular, because it was published the other day, writing a dispatch about the electoral setup, how I was convinced that it was heavily rigged, heavily loaded in every way, institutionally, legally, etc., in favor of the chosen parties and individuals, and said so. I remember having to be careful about how I said it. The Ambassador, all the people I mentioned, did not impose any kind of censorship, but on the other hand they had their instructions and they didn't want to sow discouragement. So I had to be careful about how I wrote this particular dispatch.

Q: What about the timing? Was Magsaysay of the Philippines going strong or had he recently died? I was wondering if there was a correlation between these events?

BARBOUR: I think he was dead by then but there was a correlation in more ways than you realize. We had with us General Lansdale who considered that he had made Magsaysay. General Lansdale was very present and had his own little operation, I guess. Even to this day I am not sure what it was; had with him a number of scholars and academicians and people like that. I remember one Sunday my wife and I invited to go with us on a picnic that the Vietnamese-American Association had organized a Filipino jurist who was living in the hotel. He was working on the constitution and we had become friendly with him, so we invited him to go and off we went. The following week, I don't remember the details, I was told that General Lansdale didn't like the fact that I had invited Judge So-and-so to go off with us and would I please not pursue that relationship. My attitude toward that was that General Lansdale can do his thing and what I do socially is my business. That is the way it was left.

Q: Was there any other feeling about Lansdale's operation by the political section?

BARBOUR: In retrospect I suppose he was trying to make Diem like Magsaysay, make him honest and develop him and get him all kinds of apparatus to extend his authority in the right kind of way. I guess, I am not sure. Yes, General Lansdale's operation was viewed with something close to distaste because he wanted to be alone, he wanted his autonomy to do whatever he wanted to do-I suppose the way he operated in the Philippines. They were plugged into the station, but how we were not quite sure. I didn't really care.

Q: By station you mean the CIA?

BARBOUR: Yes, the CIA station.

Q: Was there the feeling at the time, that there were wheels within wheels; that we were encouraged by the way Vietnam was going but at the same time we were developing a client state?

BARBOUR: That came a little bit later; certainly if there was sensitivity to it it was not viewed as a concern. It might even go so far as to say that a client state would insure its success. You had General Lansdale's operation; you had Michigan State University which was there under contract to AID and also helping them to write a constitution, civil institutions, under a man named Dr. Fishel. They had their own way of doing things, they were less-I don't want to use the word estranged-distant from the Embassy, but they had their separate operation. So you had Lansdale's operation, this particular operation and a large and growing USOM operations mission, and a small military assistance advisory group-it was small, limited by the terms of the Geneva accords.

Q: Fifty-five observers, or something. I guess I don't know how many.

BARBOUR: I forget the number, could it have been three hundred? Under General O'Daniel.

Q: Was there any insurgency going on?

BARBOUR: At that time, no. The central authority in Saigon was principally concerned with establishing its writ throughout South Vietnam, and in the first instance that meant against Bao Dai, the Emperor, resident in France but wanting to come back. There was a plebiscite shortly after we arrived as a result of which he ceased to be a factor. It was obviously heavily rigged, but be that as it may. Then you had some insurgencies, local South Vietnamese warlords who had probably been encouraged and tolerated by the French, who wanted to maintain their fiefdoms, including armed fiefdoms-the right to stop traffic on the road and collect tolls and things like that. There were, I think, two of those which had to be put down, and were. Everybody thought putting them down was a good thing; we talked about our Shay's Rebellion and the Whiskey Rebellion. Then came the extension of civil institutions and authority.

Q: How about the French? Did they play dog in the manger?

BARBOUR: No, the French moved out, probably happily. The last troops, the Foreign Legion, departed in April of 1956, departed proudly. I do not recall any of that on the part of the French. There was a French Embassy and a French Ambassador and I am sure that there must have been a good deal more than I saw, but I do not recall any French interference from then on. They were probably delighted to be out of the place, this was the Fourth Republic in France and it was well shed of Indochina. But nonetheless, as I mentioned, you had the signs of authoritarianism in the electoral laws, you saw it in the constitution, which I remember because I told you I translated the first version we got. Everything was hedged by "in accordance with the law." "There shall be complete freedom of the press, in accordance with the law." Everything had that qualification with it. We wrestled a lot of the time with the concept of "personalism," which was a mystical, Catholic origin, Buddhist influenced philosophy of the President's brother. No one was quite sure what it meant but it became the official ideology. Then there was the President's sister who was a pain.

Q: Madame Nhu. She was the wife of the President's brother.

BARBOUR: I beg your pardon, the President's sister-in-law. A pain, but not a major factor.

Q: How about the President's brother?

BARBOUR: That was Nhu; another brother lived up in Hue, was a mandarin, a regional autocrat.

Q: The real problem later was the President's brother and sister-in-law. How did we see them at that time?

BARBOUR: As pests. Troublesome, interfering. We didn't realize at first the enormity of the problem that they were to become. Both of them were seen as unhelpful influences. Diem himself was very difficult to deal with, for one thing he was so garrulous. He would talk and talk and talk; every American visitor who went there got a lecture of some kind. I know the Ambassador would go for long meetings with him and come back and try to piece out what it was that he had actually accomplished. I went to take notes once with a Senatorial delegation. I wrote pages and pages and pages of notes and when it came time to do the memcon I had to completely rearrange the meeting to make any sense out of it. I think everyone had that problem with him. Secondly, he was not honest with us. Whether he would lie, I don't know, but certainly he would conceal, not deliver, have his ministries hold back information. People in the government told us many things that were simply not true, knowing they were not true; it was much easier to tell us something good that was not true than something bad that was. And they didn't like us prying, trying to find out what was going on.

Q: What about corruption?

BARBOUR: Corruption certainly was endemic. We were perhaps less sensitive to it at the very beginning than we became later on. There were many, many rumors of corruption and so we were all convinced it was there, but it was more, at first at least, intellectual corruption, philosophical corruption. The Nhus were obviously getting money though I don't think we were able to identify how. By philosophical and intellectual corruption I mean *l'État, c'est moi*; whatever is good for the country me is good for me, whatever is good for me is good for the country; whatever I do is ipso facto beneficial. That is, of course, what led to awful corruption later on in all forms because it spread down to all levels of government. But that came later on.

Q: How about our view of events in North Vietnam?

BARBOUR: I think you could say that we had no illusions as to what was going on in North Vietnam, the only illusion we had was that they would respect the Geneva agreement. Illusion and hope; they said they would, they said they were. Of course we know they never had any intention of doing so. As far as what they were doing in Hanoi it was obvious. There was also the institution of the ICC, the International Control Commission, which was the treaty supervision body established by the Geneva accords with an Indian chairman, a Polish component and a Canadian component. They became my reporting responsibility later on so I spent a lot of time with them as well as with the Vietnamese who were in liaison with them. The Canadians would tell us, and some of the Indians, about what was happening in North Vietnam. There was no question of what they were doing.

Q: We may then move on to your next assignment.

BARBOUR: Well, technically my next assignment was in Hue. My wife and I drove up there in the summer of 1957 and opened a consulate. Birth pains at the end of the line in the truest sense. We opened a little consulate; I had one administrative assistant, there was also a USIS cultural center with an American and his wife, sixteen MAAG officers, Military Assistance and Advisory Group, and an American nurse supplied by the Economic Assistance Program. It was a very interesting year.

Q: Where were you? On the Perfume River?

BARBOUR: Oh yes. Again, at that time there were no restrictions on what you could do or where you could go. There was a French consul in what was still called Tourainne whom we knew quite well and we used to drive down and have dinner with them, or take the train down, have dinner with them and drive back at night. We could go hunting, which we did from time to time, at night-walk all night through the hills. Then I went on a trip with a couple of MAAG officers up into the plateau, on foot and dugout; up the river, almost to the Lao border and back through the valleys and down again. I was gone almost a week. Life in Hue was very different from life in Saigon and I did a lot more writing of basic things about what was going on up there.

Q: Was there a difference? Here was Hue, the former capital of united Vietnam; was there a different political atmosphere? Also, how was Diem's presence in Saigon impacting on this part of the country?

BARBOUR: A different psychological and cultural atmosphere. Diem was from Hue, his mother lived there when we arrived. His brother lived there; his brother was the local mandarin, and mandarin in the very classic Chinese sense almost; unmarried, shy, retiring, said to be an intellectual, who ran that part of the country, which was central Vietnam, absolutely. It was his fief, it really was. He controlled the entire government authority up there. There is a contradiction in being shy and reclusive and hard to see and running everything, but he did. His power was unseen but very present; of course it was derived from his brother. Hue was referred to as the ancient capital of Vietnam; ancient means the beginning of the nineteenth century. The oldest building up there isn't as old as the White House. But it was the traditional capital for about a hundred years. It is modeled on Peking, they even have the inner part called the "Great Within" as in Peking; the royal palace, the forbidden part, etc. It still saw itself as the repository of Vietnamese culture. The accent is different, the food is different, the attitudes are much more intellectual and detached, there are more monasteries around Hue, the royal tombs are up there. We were closer to Hanoi than we were to Saigon.

Q: What was the relation of the Vietnamese there with the Montagnards? Later we recruited the Montagnards in large numbers but there always seemed to be this problem between them and the plains dwellers.

BARBOUR: The Vietnamese certainly, I don't know if oppressed them is the right term, exploited them. As the highlands became targets of development and exploitation and the Vietnamese moved up there voluntarily they began to conflict with the Montagnards whose lands they were. The Montagnards were much happier with us, I think, than with the Vietnamese who were very aggressive. Sihanouk used to say that if there had been no French in the middle of the nineteenth century there would be no Cambodia. Yes, there were conflicts and the Vietnamese in their cultural arrogance looked down on them and exploited them and ordered them around. I remember once we were spending the night in a Montagnard village and as we were sitting around I noticed a picture of Diem up on the wall. I asked our host, "Who is that man?" He said, "I don't know." There was a Vietnamese with us who got very exercised and said, "Yes you do know who that is."

Q: Did you ever get to see Diem's brother?

BARBOUR: Yes, I had one meeting with him shortly before I left, unfortunately; I hadn't wanted to press him but use it as a social occasion to build upon later. I think I was the only American who ever saw him. We had a nice social chat about general problems up there and about American aid, he had some pet projects he hoped we would help him with. He had some criticisms of American aid which, as I recall, were factually incorrect and improperly premised. Just a few days before we were leaving we were being inspected and I had the inspector in my office and there came some messengers from the "councilor," as he was called. In they came with a pole over their head with an enormous gaur head. A gaur is a wild cow, I think, a jungle cow, an enormous beast. Here was the stuffed head of this gaur slung on the pole. That was my farewell present from the councilor.

Q: How did the Embassy use you? You already had your ties there.

BARBOUR: We were a listening post to extend the reportorial reach of the Embassy, which we did. I remember one day sitting in my office wondering what I would do with my time that day. I said to myself, "I know." I got in my car and drove down to the lagoon, it was a kind of estuary, hired a boat and went across to the other side and spent the day walking around through a couple of villages there. Then went back and wrote what I thought was a wonderful report on what life was like over there, what people were talking about and how the economy was functioning or not functioning.

Q: Did you get up to the town right on the DMZ?

BARBOUR: Yes. That was Quang Tri province; in fact we ended our hike, our walking tour, right along the DMZ in Quang Tri. Went up there several times but could never go in; I used to go up and see the province chief from time to time, went up to see some maneuvers a couple of times, paid visits. It was routinely covered from the consulate. We would go up and have dinner with the ICC from time to time.

Q: There were no cross-border problems at that time?

BARBOUR: There was no cross-border movement to speak of, except for the ICC. It was virtually impossible, except for a small number of farmers, to move back and forth.

Q: Then you left there and did what?

BARBOUR: I left there in the summer of 1958 and went to Paris.

Q: What were you doing in Paris?

BARBOUR: I was the Far Eastern fellow, which meant Indochina; although it had shifted by that time and became largely Laos where we had our alarms and discouraging leaks. From time to time I used to see Souvanna Phouma who was then in exile in Paris with his wife. I was the liaison with the Quai d'Orsay on Indochina; later that was expanded into black Africa. It was the period of de Gaulle; we arrived with the Fifth Republic and it was the beginning of African independence, in French Africa, at least. It was a very interesting time.

Q: Oh, a fascinating time. What about the Laotian thing; what was happening there and what was the French-American connection in that regard?

BARBOUR: If the French didn't have much interest in Vietnam, they retained a lot of interest in Laos and wanted very much to be informed and involved, and were. It was not mainstream Embassy work, which from my standpoint made it much more fun because the fellow doing that job had a lot of autonomy. He would decide whom to go and see, when to write it up, give his telegrams to the boss who would sign them and off they would go. There was a sense of communicating directly with the Department on those issues.

Q: Did you feel that your master was really the Far Eastern Bureau?

BARBOUR: Yes, first Far East and then African. French external preoccupations at that time were really in North Africa, meaning basically Algeria.

Q: But you had black Africa?

BARBOUR: I had black Africa.

Q: De Gaulle came in at that time; this was a return from the wilderness to put order into things. From your viewpoint what was the feeling toward de Gaulle in the Embassy?

BARBOUR: We had a very distinguished gentleman as Ambassador, Amory Houghton, a gentleman in the truest sense, who spoke no French and who rarely, practically never, saw General de Gaulle...

(Interruption on tape.)

Q: We have just moved shop here. You mentioned, going back to our previous talk about Vietnam, insurrections...

BARBOUR: They did begin to develop in Vietnam; in 1957, I think. There was one notable incident in which the Viet Cong, as they were called, captured and murdered the head of the ICC liaison mission, Colonel ..?.. So there were reports that bands would infiltrate and leave, and of incidents in the countryside, but it was not a problem, it did not hinder movement.

Q: Then back to your time in Paris. How was the return of de Gaulle seen in the Embassy? De Gaulle had been sort of a thorn in our side in World War II and right afterward.

BARBOUR: Our feelings were, as you say, somewhat ambivalent as he was a very difficult person. And Amory Houghton practically never saw him; had seen him only once in his days in his tent and very rarely afterwards. We did, however, have a very good relationship through Cecil Lyon, the DCM, with the Prime Minister, Michel Debré; they got along splendidly and saw a good deal of each other. But attitudes towards de Gaulle were ambivalent. On the one hand there was the personal and personality side, which was very much present on our minds... (phone interruption).

Q: You were talking about de Gaulle. Cecil Lyons was really the man, at that time, wouldn't you say?

BARBOUR: He was the man for most senior level dealings with the French government, but that did not go up to de Gaulle, whom we did not see very often. The Ambassador saw the Foreign Minister, who spoke excellent English, Couve de Murville. Cecil Lyon dealt with people below that level and occasionally got interested, I was happy to see, in things related to the Far East and black Africa. But our attitude toward de Gaulle was colored by the ambivalence I mentioned, on the personal side, the history of difficulty, and on the other hand what he represented for France. What he represented for France at that time we liked very much because France under the Fourth Republic was not much help to anybody. What we wanted was a much stabler, more positive looking ally. That is what de Gaulle offered, indeed brought; little did we realize that he would throw us out some years later.

Q: Was Vernon Walters there as the Military Attaché½ at that time?

BARBOUR: No, that was much later. He came twice with President Eisenhower as Lieutenant Colonel Walters, the interpreter.

Q: Let us talk then about black Africa. This was the period when black Africa was coming into its own.

BARBOUR: The French were pretty well out of Indochina, although still interested in Cambodia and Laos. Their remaining place in the world was in Africa, North and sub-Saharan. They had given Morocco its independence and Tunisia its independence while remaining in a fairly happy way there. Algeria was a department of France-"from Dunkerque to Tamanrasset, it's all France, never to be alienated." But on November 1, 1954, the Algerian insurrection broke out, and when I was there it was going full steam. Black Africa, then, represented, I guess, a different kind of hope for them because the French had a longer history in black Africa, they were deeply ensconced there and there was no sign of political unrest or anti-French attitudes in their French territories. Shortly after he took office, de Gaulle made a trip through French Africa and proclaimed the Community, the constitution provides for the Community, in which the African territories were to have a more or less independent relationship while still dependent on France in certain ways. As he went through black Africa all the African leaders signed on except one, Si<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>kou Touri<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> of Guinea. In a speech in de Gaulle's presence in Conakry, Si<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>kou Touri<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> said his Guinea would have nothing to do with the Community or any ties to France after that, it was one hundred percent independence. So de Gaulle returned to France and said, "So be it,"; Guinea was cut off. Si<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>kou Touri<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> was a very pronounced leftist Marxist demagogue anyway, and the French pulled out brutally, lock, stock and barrel. What they couldn't take with them they dismantled; it was a brutal departure, intended, of course, to indicate to the rest of the Africans what would be in store for them if they didn't like the Community.

So the Community had its day. I forget how long it lasted, but during the period it lasted General de Gaulle was President of the Republic and of the Community, and on July 14, in another two years, you had the President and the Chiefs of State of the Community. There were a lot of nice perks in it for them, belong to the community and you got your subsidies, you got this, you got that, all kinds of good things. They made it worth while. But then in the fall of 1960, I suppose, de Gaulle went to Dakar-the Senegalese had been restive-and made a speech, a landmark speech, which put all the African states on notice that if they wanted to be independent, they could be independent. He said, "Go, its okay, go," so they went. They all became independent; of course they are still in many way dependent on France, but there are no institutional ties.

Q: Were you getting any reflection of this from your contacts in the Quai d'Orsay? Why did de Gaulle first say you are either in my Community or out in the wilderness, then change to you can leave, we won't be revengeful?

BARBOUR: I think they considered they would maintain the form and let the substance go. The implication, of course, was for Algeria which was the French preoccupation at the time. If we let these states become independent then what does that mean for Algeria. De Gaulle never said, I don't think, that Algeria could never be independent but he gave that impression. So the African states adopted a new identity and became less closely tied to French policies.

Q: How did the French diplomats in the Quai d'Orsay deal with you on these things? Did they think we might go fishing in their waters, or anything like that?

BARBOUR: They were unquestionably ambivalent. On the one hand they thought, quite rightly, that we could never supplant them because of the cultural ties, that we would never really try for economic reasons. They were right on both scores. But they hoped we would be mindful of French interests and I think to a large degree we were. So I don't recall any acrimony or tension over black Africa, over Laos, yes, but not over black Africa.

Q: What was the tension over Laos?

BARBOUR: Various Laotian crises-SEATO, France was a member of SEATO-when it looked as though we were going to get involved in a larger conflict in Laos and the French didn't want to. Remember this was 1961, the beginning of the Kennedy Administration, and there was a lot of muscle flexing and there were various Laotian crises. One of these brought the Secretary and Selwyn Lloyd to Paris for a ministerial meeting on Laos. Can you imagine such a thing today? There used to be a fair number of these things. SEATO saber rattling. The French position was that we were complicating the Laotian crisis and didn't really know what we were doing. Their position was consistently that they understood what we Americans were doing but thought we were wrong; and that was what they maintained. So we had a lot of conversations with them on the subject of Laos. It was not accidental that the people we dealt with in the Foreign Ministry on Southeast Asia and on French Africa were either people who had been integrated into the Quai d'Orsay from other Ministries or, in the case of Africa, were in the other Ministries.

Q: So they brought with them a strong commitment to these areas.

BARBOUR: They did, but I think that for their Minister they represented an annoying distraction. I don't think we had any routine contacts with Couve de Murville on either subject.

Q: Were you there when the Kennedy Administration came in?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: This must of made an impact, because Kennedy as a Senator had made at least one speech about how Algeria should be free. During your time there how did you deal with this?

BARBOUR: It was ambivalence in reverse. They knew the Kennedy policy and were very worried about it, but the person was wildly popular. They liked this new President and his wife who spoke French, who knew France and things French. They were very popular, very popular. I think that applied to the government as well. He got on very well with de Gaulle when they came in May of 1961 on a real old-fashioned state visit. My place at that time was in the Quai d'Orsay, where they stayed; I didn't sleep there but I stayed there with them all day in to late night, every day they were there. I was the liaison between the party and the Quai d'Orsay or the security as far as the minutiae of the visit were concerned. It was wild and hectic and interesting. Kennedy and de Gaulle, I think, got along well. De Gaulle thought of him as an interesting young man; I think the chemistry was good. Their concerns were, of course, Europe; I don't recall whether they talked about Southeast Asia, they may have, but it certainly wasn't on the top of the agenda.

Q: Then you left Paris and went back to Vietnam? Reluctantly?

BARBOUR: Reluctantly and involuntarily, but I went. Anecdotally, after the Kennedy visit, General Gavin, who was then Ambassador, wanted to move me up to his office. But while that was in the process of developing I was summarily sent back to Vietnam, and I do mean summarily. One telegram-you are transferred, go. I don't think this sort of thing happens anymore. I didn't want to go, especially since between the Ambassador's front office and Vietnam there had emerged that fact that I was not to go to the Ambassador's office but would go back to be the French desk officer. Another reason we didn't want to go back to Vietnam; moreover we had two children by then and the war had started. So for these reasons we did not want to go back. My boss, the Political Counselor, made one telephone check and was told, "Yes, it's real," so I saluted and reversed course and we went back to Vietnam in September of 1961.

Q: What were you doing there?

BARBOUR: I was nominally deputy chief of the political section, internal affairs. Political counselor was Joe Mendenhall, another very good writer. One cannot overemphasize the importance of one's superiors as far as one's own development, both personal and professional. Given the situation at that time, he was involved with the Ambassador who was Fritz Nolting, a distinguished gentleman who, I think, had a clear set of instructions to think positively. Bill Trueheart was the DCM and tried very hard to be loyal. At that time the war was going on, our presence had greatly expanded in every area, civilian, military. The government was increasingly in trouble because of its own internal problems and weaknesses. It was a very different situation; one didn't move around the country the way we had before. So my job was essentially was to pick up and do the internal political reporting. It was not a happy time; although I have great respect for Ambassador Nolting as a person, it was quite clear that he wanted everyone to think positively and it was no longer possible to think positively about Vietnam.

I was involved in various provincial, pacification, community development programs and things like that, but there was throughout a kind of air of-oh, what is the term. We were dogged and determined but the optimism we experienced the first time we were there was long a thing of the past. We were there to do a job, we were fighting a war, a real war-and it was, there was no question about what was going on in the country. We were there to put the best light on it we could; put the best light on it through our work, in the things we were trying to accomplish, that we did, but put the best light on it in the evaluation and analysis of what we were accomplishing, that was much more difficult. We tried, but it was not easy.

Q: You came back after having been there in the "golden age," you must have known people since you spoke Vietnamese and you must have been asking these people, both professionally and personally, what had turned the situation around. What answers were you getting?

BARBOUR: On two major areas, internal and external. The external being the Viet Cong, the North Vietnamese insurrection and it was all, of course, "They are doing it to us." By and large that is true. On the internal one, the weaknesses of the government and its self-generated problems, people were reluctant to talk. It was almost impossible to get anyone who could shed light on the situation to do so; there was just no willingness to do so because everyone was afraid. The tentacles of Ngo Dinh Nhu and the government extended throughout the official apparatus and people were very wary of being caught up by them. We had a large military presence enmeshed at the working level of the Vietnamese Air Force; we were providing planes, instructors, etc.; we trained them, we flew with them, and I think it was in February of 1962, we woke up at dawn in Saigon to loud explosions and the noise of airplanes. Two Vietnamese Air Force pilots were bombing the Presidential Palace. Despite our involvement with them, and people in the MAAG knew them, no one had the slightest idea of this kind of feeling being there. There were people who would complain and voice their feelings, but they were not people who would shed light on why specifically they were afraid, what specifically had gone wrong in a particular operation. The Vietnamese are great complainers; they will complain about everything and everybody and you have to factor a lot of that out. It is the problem of finding out why on such and such a date were you told, and what exactly were you told and what did you do. We had a very difficult time getting that.

Q: You were up against the dilemma of the foreign service officer, which goes on all the time, of having to report accurately and yet be optimistic about the situation. How did this play out as far as you were concerned.

BARBOUR: Fortunately this is the only time I have experienced it. In everyday ways. You write a telegram, it is sent up for clearance and it comes back with lots of changes. Never a reversal, saying yes means no, never that. It would just come back with a different tone, a different slant; it is very vitiating of one's enthusiasm. This applied also to the rank and file of the CIA station. They had the same problem and we had a good deal of-I can't say collusion-sympathizing back and forth as to what each of us thought should be said and of what in fact was going out. Of course, at this time we were building up more and more; troops were arriving, this was the real period of the arrival of the troops.

Q: What was your impression of the CIA intelligence that they were getting that you were able to sample?

BARBOUR: What they were getting from the Vietnamese was, as I recall, not very good for the reasons I just gave you. They told you what they wanted to tell you or they didn't tell you at all. We harvested lots of lies; some of them we knew were lies, some we didn't. This is a trait, as I told you, that went back even to the very early days; people would rather tell you something untrue than something bad. Now we had this additional element of fear.

Q: You mentioned Mendenhall being a good writer. What difference does it make if an Ambassador or a head of section is a good writer?

BARBOUR: It is whether you are able to convey to your readers what you want them to know and understand. Mendenhall's position was quite difficult. He shared, I think, the general doubts and skepticism but he tried very hard to be loyal, and succeeded. He wasn't the one who marked things up, they would be marked up farther down the line. He thought we should report things as we saw them, while all the time in there fighting trying to do it. You know what life is like in Washington, but people read that which is easy to read and deals with something that interests them; the shorter the better, the more communicative the better, the easier to understand the better. That is why writing makes all the difference in the world.

Q: Were you getting any feedback from Washington, either from people coming through or personal letters?

BARBOUR: Two kinds, as I recall from my experience. Averell Harriman was the Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs at that time. He was very skeptical, and I used to see the nasty telegrams, and I am sure there were many more, questioning telegrams from Averell Harriman. "Tell me why this..." "Is it true that..." "How can you say that..." I found them very amusing but I am sure the Ambassador didn't. From the desk we got-the desk was like Joe Mendenhall, in between, they were trying to be intellectually honest but at the same time play the bureaucratic game. If the bureaucratic game was to think positive, then by George they would think positive.

Q: If you had Averell Harriman as the Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs skeptical and dubious, where was this positive policy emanating from?

BARBOUR: I am sure it started with the Vietnamese and it started from such things as-and this was after infiltration was evident-"What we really need is tactical air support. If we just had tactical air support then we wouldn't have..." whatever. So we provided some tactical air support aircraft, like the two that were used to bomb the Presidential palace; we brought in advisors, we camouflaged our military presence, which we doubled from 350 to 700, by pretending that we were there to recover equipment. Anyhow-"If we just had air support." "Okay, we will give you air support." "That is not good enough; we need communications, if we just had tactical communications." "Okay, we will provide them." So we started sending in more people; then we abandoned the limitation in the Geneva agreement entirely and brought in our own jet aircraft. Now our aircraft, our pilots have to be protected, that means Marines. I remember these episodes-I think it just went on from there, on and on. "We must have more men, more men, more men," and so it went; we got up to 500,000. When we left in the beginning of 1963, I think we were up to something under 50,000.

Q: The real push came in 1964, as I recall, when Johnson said, "Okay, let's do it." What was your impression of the military men, particularly the captains and the majors, who were out in the field? Did you get to talk to them at all?

BARBOUR: Americans?

Q: Americans.

BARBOUR: They were there to do a job, and in the first instance they wanted good relations with their Vietnamese counterparts. They were there to do a job that was training and advisory. It started out to be training and very few of them, I think, saw anything political. I don't want to be unfair to them; my impression was that very few of them raised political questions because they were too concentrated on working with the unit, the region, or the province to which they were assigned and on doing their specific things which they did extremely well. And they didn't stay very long, I think they only stayed a year.

Q: How did you look at such things as the "protected hamlet" and "revolutionary cadres" programs of Diem?

BARBOUR: We all, people in the Embassy like me, people in the CIA station, and probably in USIS, looked at them very skeptically. What was it, the "defensive hamlet?" Something like that. We armed, we trained, and they kept being overrun. We were all very skeptical but we didn't have anything better to offer, I confess. My own feeling when I left there was that we were in deep enough and I did not believe that the security of the United States was really dependent on the security of South Vietnam. We had put in, I guess, ten thousand people and if they couldn't do it then, we couldn't do it for them. And it became clear they couldn't do it.

Q: I realize you were mid-career level and all.

BARBOUR: I was quite junior; I felt as though I were quite junior.

Q: Later on, I was there in 1969, I was the only consul general and I realized that I was just, by about one person, on the upper half of the diplomatic list. I was an FSO 3 at the time and that gives you an idea of how it just got bigger and bigger. What did you feel were American interests? Why were we there?

BARBOUR: We were there to fight the North Vietnamese and to try and create the kind of country we visualized in 1955; to do two things at once. There was a third element which was to deal with the internal weaknesses, the self-created, almost willful weaknesses of the Vietnamese government, which were far more pronounced the second time around than they had been the first time. It was really pernicious and pervasive; it was everywhere, the reason people wouldn't talk to us. It was discouraging. I remember we had a provincial development campaign up in south central Vietnam, we worked very hard on it; we drew up the plans, we provided the economic wherewithal, we trained the cadres to go in. "Operation Seaswallow" it was called. We were really going to make the people in the lowlands happy that they were living in this potentially good society. When we got up there we saw that it wasn't really working. Why wasn't it working? Well, it was hard to say; deadlines were not being met, villages were not getting the equipment, the wells or the machinery that had been promised-which we had been promised, which we had been told we would have. Some were delivered and then there was a big incident up there, a military incident, and the whole thing was right back where it was. It was evident that the weakness was in Saigon.

Q: Were you and others at your level thinking that Diem and his family were the problem or were you thinking beyond that to the possibility that it was the Vietnamese way of doing things and putting someone else in wouldn't change things?

BARBOUR: The Nhu problem became evident and acute before long before then. Ambassador Durbrow, Elbridge Durbrow, who left there while we were in Paris, about 1960 and 1961, in his last meeting with Diem told him, diplomatically, that he had to get rid of his brother if he expected to salvage things. Durbrow never saw Diem again. The problem emerged well before the trouble really started.

Q: Were we transmitting this, that Diem and the Nhus were the trouble?

BARBOUR: No, No. Certainly not at my level. It was obvious-Madame Nhu was called the "Dragon Lady." He had his fuzzy, woolly-headed philosophy that he wanted everyone to live by, and the corruption both intellectual and pecuniary, were just destroying the basis of everything that we were trying to do.

Q: Was there a feeling that if you got rid of them that the situation would turn around? Or was it maybe that the system would recreate the same trouble?

BARBOUR: The first part of your question came later. As far as what we felt, at my level, was that you have to give the people a feeling that they had a stake in the country and its development, that they had a stake in its democratization, for that is the only way they had to find some economic fulfillment of their own. That is the way we felt and that was the sort of thing that both inspired us and caused us to be so frustrated because so much of what was happening in Saigon was the kind of thing that would take away the incentive.

Q: Were you looking to anyplace else-Korea, the Philippines-for a model as to what should be done?

BARBOUR: I am not sure that we did at that time. Earlier I mentioned General Lansdale and I think he was trying to emulate Magsaysay. I don't recall any at that time.

Q: Did you have much contact with the Vietnamese military, or was it sort of out of bounds for you?

BARBOUR: No, it was not out of bounds; I had a lot of contact with them during the course of these various civilian-military socio-economic programs that we had. My wife taught English to Lieutenants and Captains and we used to see them. So we had a fair amount of dealings with the military.

Q: Were they feeling under wraps so that you weren't getting any discontent from them?

BARBOUR: I don't recall any dissidence and I think my feeling probably was that if I try to talk about it with him, he would make it very uncomfortable or he might complain.

Q: Or you might be sending a message.

BARBOUR: Yes, or I might be sending a message. So we were interested, eager to hear, but I didn't from my position try to incite messages of dissidence. They were very impressive; I remember going out to visit one unit, having lunch with them, and there were some paratrooper officers there. I asked them whether they had made any combat jumps, thinking of our own World War II experiences when they made one or two, and one of them said he had had twenty-one operational jumps. I remember it vividly; and that was 1962 and many of them were at night.

Q: Nolting was there the entire time that you were there?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: How about Trueheart? These were two men who were University of Virginia pals, this was supposed to be an Ambassador-DCM combination made in heaven, but it didn't work.

BARBOUR: Well because Trueheart developed the kinds of impressions that everyone else was living with. "It isn't working, boss, and we have to recognize certain basic weaknesses in our policy and what we are doing." Nolting, I guess, just didn't want to hear it from his best friend. Their friendship, I don't know that it was totally destroyed...

Q: Well, I think it was.

BARBOUR: Certainly it ended. Trueheart became very disaffected.

Q: He wasn't doing as much to support the team...

BARBOUR: Trueheart was very loyal when he arrived; he is very perceptive and I think after a while it all got to his intellect, he reached some very profound personal conclusions, and I think also things came to a head-I don't know if you are talking to Bill Trueheart.

Q: We did earlier but he has been interviewed so much on that that I didn't interview him on it.

BARBOUR: I think something happened when he was charged<sup>1/2</sup> while Nolting was away.

Q: Yes, I think there was something then. He was reporting as he saw it.

BARBOUR: I am happy to say that was long after I left.

Q: I think we will break this now and when we come back we will pick up when you went back to the Department in early 1963.

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: Today is March the 7th, 1994. We continue. You left Vietnam in 1963 and came back to the Department where you served from 1963 to 1967. What were you doing?

BARBOUR: I started out as Portuguese desk officer.

Q: How, from your background, did you come to be Portuguese desk officer?

BARBOUR: I don't know. We had had three years in Paris and I had known Frank Malloy previously, and he was the director for Western Europe. So I suppose that and Paris and need produced the effect of my going in as Portuguese desk officer.

Q: Portugal has always been sort of the odd man out, a member of NATO since the beginning practically, but except for the Azores Portugal doesn't seem to raise a blip. What was the situation when you arrived there in 1963?

BARBOUR: Your estimate is entirely correct as far as the absence of blips on anybody's screen, which made the job very valuable as far as the desk officer was concerned. On the one hand we had a history of relationships with Portugal, we had the base in the Azores, we had a Portuguese community in the United States, we had the NATO membership, which gave it a certain intrinsic interest. On the other hand it was the Kennedy administration and there was indeed Africa-Angola and Mozambique-there was also Salazar and his men and our relations were far from good which meant that there was a certain amount of business to be done but nobody wanted to be bothered with it.

Q: A desk officer's delight.

BARBOUR: Looking back at one time, I found that of all the instructions that were sent to Lisbon in the roughly fourteen to fifteen months that I was on the job, only one did I not write. In fact, during that period... A chronic problem with Portugal was their desire to buy arms and our reluctance to sell them.

Q: This was because of Africa?

BARBOUR: Yes, their desire to buy arms because they were a member of NATO, that was their justification, and our reluctance to sell them because we feared they would be used in Africa. At one time I wrote a telegram explaining some terms and conditions under which we might be willing to sell them or to refuse to sell them. It was a telegram cleared up the line in the Department, then it disappeared. We checked around and found that it had been sent over to the White House. A few days later it came back and one of the clearances on the bottom was of the President. It was an interesting time; we had a change of Ambassadors while I was on the desk. Admiral George Anderson, Chief of Naval Operations, who had the temerity before the Armed Services Committee to express a policy line on aircraft carriers, he being an aviator, that was different from that of the administration. So President Kennedy took offense and said, "I want him out." And outed he was; he was named Ambassador to Portugal. There was a certain period of standoff while Admiral Anderson sat at his office in the Pentagon running the navy and the Department wasn't sure how to contact him. They decided that there was always an expendable desk officer they could send over and see what might happen to him, whether he would come back intact or not. So off I went to call on Admiral Anderson. A very imposing man. I went in and he was sitting in his captain's chair, literally, in an office I thought rather modest. We chatted about Portugal and he expressed his displeasure with our policies toward Portugal and how difficult it was going to be to persuade the Portuguese of the righteousness of American policies. I, to my own astonishment, said, "That will be your job, Admiral." I was an FSO 4 then and he was a four star Admiral and I couldn't imagine those words were coming out of my mouth. There was a lot of trepidation about Admiral Anderson and I remember someone saying, "He's going to be fighting his instructions every step of the way." In fact, he turned out to be a very good Ambassador; he was a very impressive, imposing individual, great presence, and he did not fight his instructions. He carried them out loyally despite his own feelings; I am sure the Portuguese knew what those feelings were which may have given him even greater impact. He served well; he was a good Ambassador.

Q: What were his feelings?

BARBOUR: He thought we were doing Portugal a great injustice by imposing various kinds of limitations on what we were willing to do, on our cooperation, on our willingness to sell arms, that it was not getting a fair shake as a member of NATO, as an ally, and that sort of thing.

Q: So you might say it was this thing that we had for a very long time with colonial powers, and this was early into the decolonization.

BARBOUR: It was more than that, because I arrived in 1963, and revolts broke out in Africa in, I think, 1961, and the Portuguese reaction was rather severe. The Portuguese were not good colonizers; they went the farthest toward assimilation and integration, but they did not make the investments, the social investments, in education, health services, opportunities, that a couple of other European countries did. So the reaction was severe in its small ways, because the Portuguese couldn't afford to do an awful lot in Africa. They began repression of the rebellion which is ironic today because it is still going on in Angola-the same players, the same forces, the same issues. Then there was the Salazar factor. Salazar was a vestige of the 1930's; he wasn't by any means a Mussolini or a Hitler, but he was a very autocratic ruler. Very much an anachronism in his personal manners-his high top shoes, things like that. He ran Portugal with an iron hand, and Portugal, the *mãe-pátria*, was an oligarchy not doing too badly, but we didn't like his style of government and considered him and it out of date, especially in that idealistic period of American policy.

Q: Were we up against a basic problem of trying to keep people from going to visit Portugal? I am talking about high officials. Were we in a sort of "minimize" situation?

BARBOUR: No, we didn't need to keep people from going because nobody went. There was not much interest in going-or to Africa. There was a public relations firm in Washington hired by the Portuguese government called Selvage and Lee, something like that, I am not sure of the exact name. We were reluctant to have any dealings with them but once again it was decided that maybe we shouldn't break off all communications with these people who did want to see people in the Department. Let the desk officer deal with that, once again. I would agree in those days it was possible to go out to lunch with them, to listen to them, to write memoranda and let them unburden themselves, for which they collected a large fee, I am sure. And that was that. They organized tours to Angola and Mozambique, though of course we could never go on anything like that-I think that my successor may have gone.

Q: Were you able to get to Portugal or to Angola?

BARBOUR: To Portugal, yes; to Portuguese Africa, no. I went to Lisbon once in the fourteen months I was on the desk and actually stayed with Admiral Anderson for whom I came to have great respect.

Q: I tried to interview him some years ago, but unfortunately he really didn't seem to be up to it.

BARBOUR: Oh really. He was such an impressive man; always good to the desk officer, no matter what the occasion in Washington, who he was meeting, he always took the occasion to express his appreciation for the support he received and said nice things about his desk officer, which I have always tried to copy, remembering him as I did so.

Q: What was your impression of the staffing of the Embassy?

BARBOUR: It was not a big Embassy; the Ambassador, the DCM, maybe two political officers and two economic officers, a commercial officer, a small consular section. It was not big, rather tidy and in an old rundown office building.

Q: I was just wondering if, since it was a backwater, and I don't mean to be pejorative, we used it to send people who were not moving on ahead, or was it a standard Embassy?

BARBOUR: It was a standard Embassy; we also had the consulate in Oporto. Portugal was a desirable place to go as far as living. The Portuguese were very pleasant, life was good and cheap, very cheap; my impression was that it was about an average Embassy.

Q: What about the reporting that was coming out? It sounds as if the reporting by the political officers wouldn't have changed much since the 1930's.

BARBOUR: Since George Kennan was there. It was reporting on what was going on in the government of Salazar. We were interested in economic policies. Portugal was still a corporative state, sort of along Italian lines. It called itself a corporative state; that was Salazar's idea. We had some business interests, investment; we did have an active commercial program. The reporting was largely domestic developments in the political sector. We were extremely interested in any trends there might have been toward liberalization, some relaxation, etc. We were always looking for that, we never got much but we were always looking, hoping.

Q: What were we getting out of Africa? Did we have posts there?

BARBOUR: Yes, a consulate in Luanda and a consulate in Mozambique, a consulate-general. Harry Reed was in Luanda at that time.

Q: Did they report to you or to the African Bureau?

BARBOUR: They reported to AF, so that every telegram that went out in the way of instructions or comments to Lisbon had to be cleared with both AF and IO, the U.N. office. And there were battles, battles, battles.

Q: Could you give me an idea of what the battles were over?

BARBOUR: I can't remember any particular words. There was in AF, Mac Godley, who was the director of AF South, and his desk officer was Matt Loram; then later, I think Charlie Whitehouse replaced Mac Godley. They were worthy adversaries. I forget who was in IO, but this was a very liberal period.

Q: This was Soapy Williams' time?

BARBOUR: Soapy Williams was the Assistant Secretary and Wayne Fredericks was the deputy. In IO Joe Sisco was the office director. It was frequently difficult, but I must say never unpleasant. We would have lots of bureaucratic battles; it would be over words. We can't say that; It doesn't agree with our policy.

Q: The African Bureau then was pushing for making known our displeasure that there were colonial...

BARBOUR: Supporting; moral support at least to the insurgents and we, of course, were saying, "You can't do that."

Q: Was there any concern on your side that these insurgents represented Soviet influence? Was this bandied about?

BARBOUR: Oh sure; that was a possibility although it became much more acute under Kissinger. We were overtly involved with them then; I think we were giving them scholarships and money for the insurgents, money for medicines and education through foundations. I don't think there was anything covert going on though I am not sure. Indeed overtly and politically and psychologically we gave them lots of moral support. Our European Bureau was trying to maintain the line that Portugal was an ally, a member of NATO, and we couldn't go around subverting it.

Q: How did this play with the African Bureau?

BARBOUR: We always worked it out; but we had various devices which are no longer possible. I am sure you are familiar with them. If you wrote a telegram it went on the green sheet of paper, which was the original and the one from which the encrypted telegram was sent. So what you did was, you wouldn't send the original around to your adversaries for clearance, you would send a carbon and say, "We have to have it back in three days." No return, send it anyway. Of course, that was rather high handed and didn't work very often. Then, as happened once under my predecessor when a telegram was sent for clearance and the Africans added a paragraph and then sent it, you would draw a line from the last word all the way down to the bottom of the page so that nothing could be added. We always worked it out. Sometimes we had to take our compromises up to Soapy Williams in his office late at night, but again with Mac Godley and Matt Loram, who are very intelligent people, and in the UN, I think Mike Newlin was there, we always worked it out.

Q: How major a factor were the Azores at that time?

BARBOUR: That was one of the things we didn't want to jeopardize. It certainly was not a factor in our relations with Portugal, they didn't wave it at us, saying you behave or out you go.

Q: That came later on, didn't it?

BARBOUR: It has never been an issue as far as I know.

Q: Were there any negotiations?

BARBOUR: Not during the time I was there. There were periodic negotiations and I did some later on but not at that time.

Q: How did you find Anderson as far as having clout in Washington when there were problems? Could he use his Pentagon allies to help?

BARBOUR: No, he didn't do that. He established credibility simply by his loyalty to his instructions and he would go in and tell the Portuguese things they would rather not hear. He was a man of parts anyway; yes, he had credibility here. It was just that Portugal at that time was not high on the screen. There was one episode involving George Ball when I think he actually went to talk with Salazar, a meeting of which nothing came. The thought was that he would go and talk with Salazar and persuade him, perhaps, that if he relaxed his policies in Angola and Mozambique then maybe we could find some way of responding. It was very tenuous, very unsuccessful and that was the only high level interest that came of it; I, of course, wrote all the papers for Ball.

Q: What was Ball's impression of Salazar?

BARBOUR: I vaguely remember that he considered him an anachronism; there was no personal rapport whatsoever. Salazar was indeed a strange individual, he had been a bachelor all his life, lived a spartan existence with his sister and was impervious to outside influence. There was not much rapport in the meeting. The Foreign Minister was at that time, I think, Machado; he was a lively, outgoing individual, spoke excellent English and came here on a visit. He was unbending when it came to politics, but an articulate exponent of it.

Q: You were there about eighteen months?

BARBOUR: No, I had the job only fourteen months and then moved over to the French desk.

Q: So you were there from 1964 to 1967?

BARBOUR: The fall of 1964 until about May of 1967.

Q: What were your responsibilities during this period?

BARBOUR: It was going from one extreme to the other; from a country which didn't command a lot of attention to one that found everyone in Washington an expert. Everybody knew everything about France, everybody wanted to play in the game; Ball was interested in France. The White House was much less interested under Johnson, not to the same degree that the Kennedy White House had been. It was not just the official community that wanted to be involved in France and knew more than everybody else, lots of people outside as well.

Q: Of course, every Congressman and Senator hits France once a year probably on a tour of some kind or other.

BARBOUR: The French Embassy was also an important factor. Hervé Alphand, the Ambassador, and his sparkling wife were the ultimate of Embassies. Everybody wanted to be invited to the French Embassy. They entertained all the time, very skillfully, not lavishly but very, very well. The French Embassy was the social center of Washington. They used it extremely well; Alphand was a consummate diplomat, very popular, he had a reach all over town. He could pick up the telephone and call anybody, I guess no longer the President at that time, he could go see them, and he made no bones about laying down the French position in whatever terms it took; he was very effective, and it didn't interfere with his personal popularity.

Q: We are talking about the time when de Gaulle was de Gaulle. This was a real change in the situation in that France was moving on an independent course.

BARBOUR: In the first instance the French preoccupation had been with Algeria, a policy with which we were very uncomfortable but about which we were very uncertain. No one really knew what de Gaulle's intentions were; whether he was going to be the person he turned out to be, or whether he was going to crack down and make his peace with the military. We suspected the former, but had nothing to go on. We did have a superb Ambassador in Paris who had a communication, a dialog with the French that has rarely been equaled. This was Chip Bohlen. Our relations with France were correct, sometimes cordial, sometimes frosty, but he never lost communication. He could see anybody; he could see de Gaulle whenever he wanted, but of course he didn't overwork that. He played golf with Couve de Murville almost every Sunday. They found him worth talking to and therefore they gave him the time and the access. So we had a very active relationship with France for all those reasons and they encompassed all fields but were particularly focused on France and Europe, France and NATO, France and us.

Q: Were you the desk officer?

BARBOUR: I was the desk officer and so-how did the lowly desk officer play in that?

Q: Yes; this is a whole different game from before; this is the 1964 to 1967 period.

BARBOUR: At the very beginning, before I went on to the desk, I realized that we had in Washington a rather awesome local Ambassador, Alphand. I had been on the desk for some period of time and I had met him in meetings. My wife and I were invited to a large reception and there he and his wife were in the receiving line, and as my wife and I approached he turned and his face lit up and he shook hands and said, "How nice to see you here; come let me show you my paintings." He left the receiving line and took us around and showed us the paintings and the lovely residence. This was no mark of personal recognition; what he was doing was showing that he recognized that a desk officer, even way down where you are, is still important later in the game. And that is true; no matter how many other things are going on it is the desk officer who writes the basic papers, it is the desk officer who requests the appointments, it is the desk officer who prepares the records. Not just for him, he had his own means of access, but for his Embassy. No matter what, the official relations with France were, for the most part, funneled through the Department and most of it started at the lowest level which was the desk officer. So we on the desk, Dick Wyman and Dick Aherne, the assistant desk officer, were involved in all the basic parts that go into implementing a policy. Our policy at that time was, I think, to make the best of de Gaulle and to hope for the best, and we did.

Q: When did de Gaulle pull out of NATO or make his announcement?

BARBOUR: He threw us out of France in 1966; by the time I came on the desk he had already withdrawn from the integrated command structure. The big problem while I was on the desk was the American withdrawal.

Q: Had that already been announced?

BARBOUR: No.

Q: How did that hit you? Were you ready for it?

BARBOUR: Well, it was dramatic. Bohlen told us at least a month, or months, in advance that he thought it was going to happen. There were various people to whom he talked regularly and he discerned-and perhaps some were trying to tell him without being disloyal-that this was going to happen. He was right. It was announced in a press conference, as I recall, but we, the U.S., had been warned to expect it well in advance. It is possible that these people talking to Bohlen had been instructed to let us know without saying so.

Q: What was the reaction that you were getting and what did you do?

BARBOUR: People were very upset about it but there was nothing we could do and we, the President, took the position that we should comply with it. If they wanted us to be out within a defined period we shall be out. And we were out! We had a lot of bases, rather large facilities, in France.

Q: What sort of work did this cause for you?

BARBOUR: I am trying to recall any specific activities that resulted from that aside from papers, the usual papers-what lies behind it, what his intentions are. Life on the desk at that level went on; the turmoil obviously was much higher. Bill Tyler was the Assistant Secretary, he knew all about France and then he was replaced by John Leddy who was working with Ball and the Secretary. The turmoil in the relationships existed side by side with business as usual and I was more the business as usual side.

Q: There was no order to cool it with France, or something like that?

BARBOUR: They went through that and decided no. There was no point to it; there was nothing we could do and France was still France and de Gaulle was very much in charge and he was changing the rules of the game. We had constant frustrations with his strategic policies-the independent force de frappe and their own, as it was sometimes called, "tear off an arm" strategic policy-we may not be able to do much but we will at least tear off an arm and make them sorry. So they developed their own strategic forces...

Q: You are talking about nuclear forces?

BARBOUR: Nuclear forces. At that time they only had two of the manned bombers and then they got into submarines, with no help from us. Their refueling aircraft were all American. They had their testing; they continued to test in the atmosphere long after we stopped. That was an annoyance but there was nothing we could do about it. We had one awful episode in which American aircraft based in France, this would have been before 1966, in 1965 I guess, flew over the French nuclear plant at Pierrelatte, made a number of passes at it photographing all the time. The French sent their aircraft up to intercept and force us down but we could outrun them. It was for four or five days a wild time; the French were incensed, our Air Force was evasive, the Department of State had one reaction and I think the Pentagon had another. When the aircraft returned to their base which was French, there was the base commander to greet them saying "give me that film." And they handed it over to him! It was the only time in my entire service that the Secretary of State called me at home; he asked, "What on earth is this all about? What has happened? What is the state of play?" He could not believe it when I told him that we handed the film back. That was Dean Rusk. It was a very active time.

Q: The historian might want to look a column of Art Buchwald, a humorist, of that period in which he said that this was actually being done as a birthday present for de Gaulle, that we were going to give him an album of pictures of his nuclear establishments. I remember the incident and particularly the column which was hilarious, talking about how it was going to be a surprise photo album of his nuclear establishments.

BARBOUR: We denied that we were doing it to take photographs; it was just training practice and things like that. I was on the telephone two or three times a day, at least, with Bob McBride, the DCM in Paris. At that time, to make a telephone call to Paris was less routine than it is today; we were constantly on the phone, day and night. But life went on. There was another episode when the first astronauts, who were then world celebrities, were being feted at a dinner on the eighth floor of the Department by the President. This was when he had been reelected and Hubert Humphrey was the Vice President. I was at home that night minding my own business when John Leddy called and said, "Don't do anything, but I want to tip you off that the President may decide to send the astronauts to Paris with the Vice President." So I thought a moment, and then taking a deep breath I called Bob McBride in Paris, it must have been three o'clock in the morning their time, and said, "Don't tell anybody I have called but you should know that you may be in for a surprise." And I told him and then said, "But don't do anything, I'll call you back." No sooner had I hung up than John Leddy called again and said, "They are leaving immediately. You better tell Paris." So I called him back and told him; you can imagine-they are arriving in seven hours. Then George Ball called and wanted to talk about the Embassy and its preparations, etc., and then he said, "You better call Stan Carpenter," head of the economic section, "and let him know." Ball knew Carpenter very well. Then he said, strange words in today's context, "Very well, I am leaving everything in your hands." So I went down to the Operations Center and set up and we opened up a telephone line. I remember saying to McBride on the telephone, this must have been 11:00 P.M., "I can see the helicopters lifting off from the White House. Good luck."

Q: What was the "corridor" estimate of de Gaulle within EUR at that time?

BARBOUR: De Gaulle was a prickly enigma; he was not responsive to the urgings of American policymakers. He was not hostile and in fact during the Cuba crisis of 1962 he made it clear that he would stand with the United States.

Q: He was the strongest supporter.

BARBOUR: He wasn't enthusiastic but he minced no words. So he commanded tremendous respect, of that there is no question. We were impressed by what he was achieving. We still saw France in terms of what it was coming out of-the Fourth Republic, much easier to deal with but much less effective on the world stage. So what he had achieved in France in terms of unity, cohesion and orderliness, commanded great respect, despite everything.

Q: Did you feel any sense of a mood that because France was out of NATO we had better put more chips in the kitty with Germany? Did you feel any shift to a more German centered policy?

BARBOUR: No, I didn't sense it, not at my level, at least. Germany was obviously a growing power, but at that time it had not emerged onto the stage to the extent it did later. We, of course, moved a lot of things to Germany and we were actively building up Germany politically. So I may be contradicting myself when I say "no, not at my level," when the fact is what you say was going on. But it was not at the expense of France because our relations were just too broad; every government agency in Washington had something going with France or had an interest there that they wanted to protect and this continued after we got out. France was still a part of NATO; a year or so after I left there were some very quiet coordinating relationships with the French general staff, again at de Gaulle's direction. The important relationships were maintained and France was very much an ally. Giscard d'Estaing came here on a state visit, there were constant comings and goings, they participated in all NATO ministerial meetings, foreign and defense. So despite the downs in the relationship France remained very much a player in European politics as far as we were concerned. The relations between France and Germany had been solidified in 1963 by the de Gaulle and Adenauer agreement on, among other things, cultural exchanges which launched a vast program of cultural exchanges for students. It was a real reconciliation which was due to the historical perspectives of the two leaders.

Q: Was Vietnam playing any role in your relations with the French or was this not your province?

BARBOUR: The French did not approve of what we were doing in Laos, Cambodia, or Vietnam, and they had made that quite clear. It was a subject of various conversations for which I was the note taker but I do not recall it being much a part of the activities in which I participated. They kept telling us it was going to go wrong, they were not cooperative because they thought we were making an enormous mistake, and as far as I was concerned, I do not recall writing any papers on Vietnam except on a couple of de Gaulle press conference items. We got it off of our AFP ticker, live, so to speak, and had to have something up to George Ball by the end of the day. Since we got them in late afternoon we had to be very quick and I remember that there was not even time to clear it with FE, as it was then called. That, of course, was very nice from our standpoint, it went straight up to Ball. But I don't remember serious policy operations between France and the United States on Southeast Asia. The lines were too clearly drawn.

Q: You left the French desk in 1967 and where did you go and what were you doing?

BARBOUR: First I went to the Foreign Service Institute to study Italian and while I was there, one Saturday morning I was called on the phone by Walter Stoessel and asked if I would go to the ESSGA, the Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly, following the Six Day War. They needed someone to be the EUR fellow up there, would I go? I said yes if I could go back to school when it was over. So off I went to New York for that special session. It was very glittering, at the Ministerial level. That was, of course, at the time of the Glassboro meeting...

Q: In New Jersey, halfway between New York and Washington.

BARBOUR: Exactly. Tommy Thompson, who at that time was the advisor on Soviet relations, was there as counselor; he was the intermediary. The Romanians were there and we were trying to draw the Romanians out of the Soviet orbit. It was an exciting week. I was the note taker for everything Rusk participated in with Europeans.

Q: What were the European issues of the Six Day War?

BARBOUR: Settlement, certainly an Israeli-Arab settlement. Abba Eban was there, the Foreign Minister of Israel, and I remember he told Dean Rusk-I guess I heard the Secretary tell somebody else since I would not have been at that meeting-that everything was negotiable except the Golan Heights. That is interesting today. We were interested in the Romanians. All the NATO Foreign Ministers were there; they were very exercised about de Gaulle's attitude during the Six Day War. Mr. Harmel was there from Belgium. De Gaulle had made some statements that were really strange; I don't recall the text but they were somewhat out of character and not very realistic we thought, very critical of Israel and the Western Powers. It didn't seem to fit into anything.

Q: I think it was interpreted at the time that de Gaulle was going to jump into the Arab camp; that he was taking advantage of a difficult time.

BARBOUR: I remember I was walking with Mr. Harmel, it must have been just after his meeting with the Secretary, and he was chatting about how strange these remarks were. And I said, "Yes, I think General de Gaulle has slipped his trolley." Again, I was shocked at my own brashness and he was too.

Q: Then you went back to language training?

BARBOUR: Back to Italian, then went to Rome in September of 1967, with my family by ship.

Q: The Constitution or Independence?

BARBOUR: The Atlantic; actually it was the last voyage. It was a one class ship, wonderful time; lots of children, lots of programs for children. Ten or twelve days to Naples via Casa Blanca, Gibraltar, Barcelona, Nice, Monaco, Genoa.

Q: What was your job?

BARBOUR: I started out as number two in the political section with the external portfolio, dealing with the Foreign Ministry. That was a very topical portfolio- whatever was going on consult the Italians on, Africa, Europe, Middle East, Far East, whatever. It was Italian foreign policy which was, after France, very different from working with French policy.

Q: Who was the Ambassador, the DCM, and the chief political officer?

BARBOUR: Fred Reinhardt was the Ambassador, a superb Ambassador; a man of great of presence, knew the Italians, commanded wide respect. Frank Malloy was the DCM, obviously how I happened to go there, and Sam Gammon was the counselor for political affairs. Very strong.

Q: One has a pretty good shot at what French foreign policy is, even though it is at odds with the United States, but Italian policy seems hard to grasp. How would you describe the basics of Italian foreign policy and our role in it at that time?

BARBOUR: In the context of France, it was the mirror image. Dean Acheson said that de Gaulle created an image of a France that gave an impression of strength that did not exist. Italians had the wherewithal for an active and strong foreign policy but they chose not to exercise it. Their interests were Europe and the United States, and to some degree former Italian parts of Africa. They maintained relations with everybody, had Embassies all over the world, had commercial and economic interests, but foreign political interests of a world scale they did not have. I remember during my time in Washington when we created in NATO the nuclear planning group that was to have been of five countries; Italy was not included in the original group because it was a non-nuclear power. The Italians were terribly upset at being left out, and by dint of stirring up great commotion they managed to get themselves included. The reason that they were so concerned is very typical of their foreign policy interests-it would have looked bad for Italy to be left out. Impressions, appearance; appearances are very important. Appearances would have been bad to have been left out so they got themselves in and didn't play much of a role, of course.

Their Ambassador then was ..?.. who was somewhat the Italian counterpart of Alphand; he cut a wide swath in Washington society. Very active, lived in that residence up on Sixteenth Street where he was mugged once as I recall, and a rock was thrown through the window. It was not a happy neighborhood but they hung on there for a long time. He played a role in Washington that was disproportionate to their interests and disproportionately large to what they had to contribute, but disproportionately large in those areas that really mattered, relations with the United States and NATO. EC at that time was just in the developing stage.

Q: Did you find your political section working with your desk to make sure that the Italians were included in things?

BARBOUR: No, we didn't have to play that role; the Italians played that very successfully and skillfully for themselves. The reporting was basically on Italian politics, trying to keep things sorted out; who was up who was down, what party A was doing, what party B was doing. The reporting assignments were divided up so that one person did the Christian Democratic Party and the Vatican, one person did the left, the Socialists and Communists, and I think there was a third person who did all other parties. So we had three people on Italian domestic politics, which is, of course, a great game. The Italians invented the game and played it better than anybody else.

Q: You were a new boy on the block, you weren't one of the old Italian hands. I must say in my short time in Italy I wondered whether the game was worth it though it was interesting; nothing seemed to change. Did you ever have that feeling, wondering what it was all about?

BARBOUR: No, I don't think it was "what is this all about?". The first item of priority in Italian domestic politics at that time was relations with the communists, PCI; we didn't see them.

Q: We didn't have any contact with them at all?

BARBOUR: Overtly we had no contact, covertly we had some very low level, discrete, and unproductive and uninteresting contacts. They were not interested in dealing with us in that way, they wanted to talk to the Americans in the middle of the street and be seen doing it. So we were very skittish of the communists and we were very skittish of the Italian establishment's dealings with them that were taking place all the time, even more than we knew. The Foreign Minister was, or became after I arrived, Pietro Nenni, a Socialist. There was a lot of ruffling of feathers in Washington because Socialists at that time were just one shade away from communists. So it was the Communist Party, its ups and downs, and ambitions, and presumptuousness that was our first concern. Secondly, and to a much greater extent as time passed, was the internal weakness of the Christian Democratic Party. We knew, and kept saying, that though governments came and went all the time that was stability not instability because look who was in them. You also had the opening to the left when the Socialists were brought in. That had taken place before I arrived but it was then in play, so the maneuverings had their interesting and important gradations and we were very much a part of reporting them and analyzing them. The interest was very high. You mentioned earlier the Congressional attitude toward France, it was much greater toward Italy because you had a small but very active, an occasionally emotional, Italian constituency there which the Italians knew how to work very well.

Q: Did this opening to the left make any difference?

BARBOUR: No, but we were afraid it might, that they might let the communists in and then goodness knows what might happen. We had, and I guess still do, some very important military facilities in Italy. We were concerned mostly about that; and we were concerned about keeping the establishment in office, helping it, supporting it, which was the reason that we would not undercut them by seeing the communists. It was all very active and at that time given great importance.

Q: Did you have a feeling that we were still giving CIA money to the Christian Democrats? It was certainly an open secret that we made tremendous contributions back in 1948 to the election, but the charge has been leveled at us today that by our contributions we helped sustain a very corrupt regime.

BARBOUR: I don't there there is any question, we were terribly afraid of the alternative. The alternative was the left-the Communists and the Socialists. We remained at that time very concerned about the possibilities that the Communists would gain strength.

Q: At that time, how did we view the Communists as being a tool of the Soviets?

BARBOUR: If you were in a communist party anywhere you were ipso facto a tool of the Soviets. I don't think we made any distinction between the two. The Italian Communists at that time still had the post Togliatti leadership, Enrico Berlinguer, and on foreign policy he toed the Soviet line, he never departed from it. On internal things he had his own ideas, but on NATO, Germany, he was very much a supporter of the communists; he was not the apologist that the French communists were but he certainly was a supporter. He had to, that was where his money was coming from.

Q: What about the Communists and NATO? We had Sixth fleet bases, air bases, a lot of stuff in Italy and a lot of the working force was communist.

BARBOUR: It was not an issue; I do not recall it being an issue. There would be occasional strikes and things like that. But don't forget that the Italian trade unions, each one of which belonged to a different party, were also very much a part of the establishment.

Q: There was not a use of the labor movement to disrupt NATO activities?

BARBOUR: No, the most serious events, with enormous implications for the following years, were the beginnings of extreme left radicalism. I remember that one day about noon I was going to the Foreign Ministry in an Embassy car and we drove through a park, I forget its name, and suddenly we were surrounded by students and police. There was a big riot going on; we were not bothered as we were on the fringes. You could flag that as the beginning of the far left turmoil in Italian politics which went on for some years, and indeed the Red Brigades and others soon followed. That December, 1968 I guess, the Milan bombings and the Banca ..?.. bombing, which was just around the corner from the Embassy. One evening about six o'clock a big bang ..?.. the building, I walked over to see what was going on and somebody said the boiler had blown up. It was not that at all, it was a bomb. That was the episode and the beginning of a situation that became much worse in the ensuing two or three years.

Q: We had a Red Brigade killing in Naples in 1980. Were we getting any reporting on the development of these extreme left-wing groups?

BARBOUR: Not internally, nobody was. They were quite closed at the beginning. I think our estimate of them at the time was correct-unpredictable and dangerous, likely to grow. The Italian reaction at that time was somewhat confused; this was at the early stages, before the Italians got into them through their own drug addicts which really broke the backbone some years later. It was a difficult period.

Q: Did we have much of a feel for what was going on in the universities at that time?

BARBOUR: The Italian universities at that time were to a large degree written off by us as educational institutions. They were hotbeds of political extremism, the students were students in name only, their degrees were not worth anything. I don't know if I am answering your question. We accepted them as being hothouses of political radicalism.

Q: And what was the feeling? That most people would go through them and when they came out settle into the real world?

BARBOUR: No. These people were different, these people were really wild and they were killing people. Other than that, that evaluation of the Italian university system-there were a couple that were considered least political; I think Pisa maintained a standard and maybe Torino. Certainly the University of Rome was really out of bounds.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover in your time in Rome?

BARBOUR: There were two phases. One when I was doing external affairs. In December of 1967, as I shaved that morning I heard that the King of Greece had arrived in the middle of the night, in exile from a failed anti-Colonels coup in Athens in April. I heard it on the radio and then as I walked to work past the Greek Embassy it was surrounded by police, television vans, and the usual turmoil that goes with that sort of thing. Late that afternoon I went over to the Spanish Embassy to call on a colleague and got back to the Embassy about 7:00 and was called in to see the Ambassador. He said that he had been on the phone with the Department about the King and they had said that they wanted to get in touch with him and keep in touch with him; "detail somebody to that job." So he wanted me to do that. He had arranged to call on the King that evening at 9:00 but was leaving by train at 10:30 to go skiing with his son. I would go with him to go see the King and do whatever was necessary after that. So off we went to see the King, who was in his cousin's-the Duke of Hesse-beautiful little villa smack in the middle of Rome, concealed from sight, behind walls, enclosing about ten acres; a little jewel. We talked to him and he gave us his version of what had happened, why he was there and who had let him down, things like that. Then we walked out through the paparazzi and the hordes of newspapermen and klieg lights to the car and Reinhardt said, "Don't stop." We went back to his house while he packed his bag and said to me, "Now you go back to the Embassy and I'll be up in (so-and-so) and call me if you need me." That was the beginning of an episode that lasted all the time I was in Rome.

Q: You mean a continuing relationship with the King?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: What was your impression of the King?

BARBOUR: I don't want to go into too much detail because he is still...I don't think it would be fair to him. I had an intimate relationship with him, I saw him frequently. During those days when Reinhardt was skiing, I saw him at least once a day, at his request. I climbed over fences and went through back walls and went back and wrote a telegram, never indicating that the Ambassador was out of town. "Constantine told us this afternoon..."

In response to Constantine's request for a meeting..." I never fingered the Ambassador for being away. In the early days it was an interesting and exciting period and we kept it quiet, I must say.

Q: What was our interest?

BARBOUR: We didn't know, we weren't sure what our interest was. This was 1967, Johnson was President. We didn't really know what to make of it, or him, or the situation in Greece. We were not comfortable with the Colonels; Constantine had had a good image in Washington, but we didn't know what to make of him and this may have been the first time that we ever had anyone who spent long hours with him while he talked. For somebody in my situation it was quite interesting.

Q: Was his mother, Queen Frederika, around, was she a factor?

BARBOUR: She was there when he arrived. He arrived with his mother, wife, two children and his sister, and Ambassador-I have forgotten his name-who was his Grand Chamberlain. The King wanted to talk about Greek personalities who were rather far off my screen at that time; but fortunately everything is phonetic, at least I could write down the sounds. It was an interesting period, interesting but I don't think very important.

Q: You continued this until the time you left in 1972?

BARBOUR: Yes. He moved out of the Embassy where the Ambassador was extremely uncomfortable having him as a guest; he moved from there to a hotel, another hotel, into a house on the Appian Way and then into a house in the country. I saw him, of course, with less and less frequency.

Q: Did you find a change in this relationship when the Nixon administration came in?

BARBOUR: Yes, there was a change because we no longer had any doubts. Kissinger came in with realpolitik, one hundred percent pragmatism exactly; the Colonels were in, the King was out, so be it.

Q: What did this do to this connection that you had?

BARBOUR: It had never been easy for him to establish a direct, substantive relationship with people in Washington at the highest levels, but there had been a semblance of interest and that semblance ended.

Q: I was consul general in Athens from 1970 to 1974 and that was a time when we were trying to deal with the Colonels straight on.

BARBOUR: Of course he always dreamed of going back and resuming his throne and was always led to believe by the various players that maybe a deal could be made or something would come of it. His dreams were always of resuming his throne. The people in Athens never told him it was utterly impossible, in fact the reverse. He kept his airplane for a long time, the airplane that he had flown to Rome on; it stayed there for some months, as I recall, and finally he sent it back. They maintained a civil list for him and he was in communication with them.

Q: It wasn't a violent break, he made his move but it wasn't a bloody one. The royal family there had never completely taken in Greece, it was a German family and Queen Frederika had gotten a lot of notoriety because of her political views. It wasn't a beloved relationship. Also he failed; if you do a coup and then fail, well the Greeks are political animals.

BARBOUR: He probably had a role there as a British type monarch, someone who represents national unity above the constant warring of the political parties.

Q: Was there something else we should cover?

BARBOUR: There was the worst Presidential visit I ever experienced.

Q: Oh good, I like to hear about those.

BARBOUR: Lyndon Johnson, December 1967, had gone to the funeral of the Australian Prime Minister who died while swimming. While there he felt he had to return by way of Vietnam, none of this had anything to do with Rome. In the third week of December, I suppose, Harry Shlaudeman, who was working for the Secretary then, showed up in Rome and was seen in and out of the Ambassador's office several times. I think, in retrospect, Harry had been sent there by the Secretary to tell Reinhardt very privately that something might happen. Sure enough, in Vietnam, by this time it was about December 21st or 22nd, the President had the brainstorm of thinking that in the context of Vietnam what could be better than to be in Rome with the Pope on Christmas Eve. Horace Busby and somebody else showed up in Rome and took rooms in the hotel across from the Embassy, where they stayed; no contact. On about the 22nd, I think, they came over and informed the Ambassador that the President had decided to visit the Pope on Christmas Eve and make an appeal for peace in Vietnam, but we were not to say anything to the Italians. I guess at that particular moment both Frank Malloy and Sam Gavin were away and I was sort of sitting in the DCM's office for reasons I am not sure, so I was in that meeting. Reinhardt said, "He can't come to Italy without seeing the President of Italy." One of them said that he didn't like that at all, he knew Johnson's mind, Johnson wanted to see the Pope, come in and leave. Reinhardt made his point again, it would be a national insult, he could not just come in and go without touching Italian base. One of them said, "I think we have to remember for whom we are working." Reinhardt said, "I know full well, I do not need to be told, for whom I am working; but he cannot come here without seeing the President of Italy." "So be it, but do not tell the Italians." This was at most three days before he was due to arrive.

Before long, the Italians were on to it themselves, in principle if not in detail; then we were authorized to discuss arrangements. Yes, he would go out to see the President of Italy at his Villa out near Fiumicino. But some of the details, such as where he would land were not to be revealed because a decision had not been made whether he would land at Fiumicino or Ciampino. All the vast machinery was set in place; the White House had sent some White House helicopters to Spain where they awaited orders, a vehicle was to be dropped at the airport, etc. So we began planning; by now it was the 23rd of December and he was due the next day.

Q: Italy sort of turns off around Christmas.

BARBOUR: What happened was that December 24th was a very foggy day in Spain, nothing could take off; no helicopters or aircraft with vehicles or anything else. So we brought some helicopters down from Aviano, American Army helicopters with pilots who had probably never seen Rome before, much less by dark. We staked out some landing grounds up behind St. Peters; did all the things we could, rushing like mad to make the necessary provisions for the visit. I remember, and regret to this day, that a colleague and friend who was working for President Saragat asked, "Tell us what airport he is going to use, for goodness sake." I said, "I don't know." And that was a lie; by that time we did know. I always regret that; it is the only time I ever told a colleague anything that wasn't true. I remember it and I still regret it. Anyhow, that afternoon, December 24th, we were told that he would land at Fiumicino and while on the ground he would want his friends to do shopping for him, Christmas presents and things like that. I may be a day late, it may have been December 23rd because I believe it was also my birthday; but during such turmoil and confusion I was not really sure which. The Secret Service came in and together we drove out to a field near the President of Italy's lodge where President Johnson was supposed to land in the helicopters. It was just a field, nothing more; to their great credit the Secret Service just looked at it and said, "Let's hope they don't suck anything up." So we put some automobiles around with their lights on and the Italians tolled off a couple of battalion helicopters to lead. The President landed, got in the helicopter at Fiumicino with the Chief of Protocol and Ambassador Reinhardt and turned to Reinhardt and the President's Ambassador Orlandi ..?.., a very distinguished man who spoke perfect English, and said to Reinhardt, "I only wanted to come here to see the Pope." Those were his true feelings, I am sure. They landed out there in total darkness, got down all right, had their meetings, got back on the helicopters to fly to see the Pope. The Italians leading, in to St. Peter's; there was a small field behind the North American College in the Vatican which was the landing site. There were some automobiles with headlights out on this patch of grass which was quite wet because it had been raining. We had somebody from the Embassy out in the middle of it waving a flashlight, that was where they were to touch down. The helicopter with the President in it did go down and as it landed, the ground being so wet, it sank in up to the middle of its wheels. The pilot reported it and the second helicopter said "Not me, I'm not going in there," and he landed smack in the middle of St. Peter's Square.

Then while all this was going on the President's friends were buying Christmas presents; paintings-he wanted so many paintings delivered to the airplane to pick from-and jewelry from stores that had to be opened up at 11:00 o'clock on the night of the 23rd. It was just a haze, I can't even remember the dates. Anyhow he left leaving the Italians with a bad taste in their mouth, the Pope unwilling to commit himself to support the American policy in Vietnam. It was a Presidential visit the likes of which, fortunately, I never saw again.

Q: Did you have a lot of ruffled feathers or did the Italians just take the measure of the man and say okay?

BARBOUR: The Italians put the best face on it, as they know how to do better than anyone else in the world and portrayed it as a very successful, pleasant visit between two chiefs of state, after which he also called on the Pope.

Q: Shall we stop here? We will end the Rome business in 1972 and move on to what you did after that.

Q: Today is March 16, 1994. Did you have anything to add about Rome?

BARBOUR: Yes, there were a couple of points I wanted to go back to. In 1969 I became head of the political section, working for an amazing Ambassador, highly controversial, about whom, as I once told him, no one has had mixed feelings, they are either very strongly for or very strongly against. That was Graham Martin. Graham Martin had a strength of personality that is very rare in the Foreign Service. He did not hesitate, when he felt strongly enough, to tell a Cabinet Minister that it would not be convenient for him to visit ..?.. at that time, tell another one that if he wanted to come at that time, he, Martin, would not be involved. On another occasion, this is purely anecdotal, after the Agricultural Attaché<sup>1/2</sup> had been injured in an automobile accident and the medical bills were piling up and were not being paid to the great annoyance of the local hospital-the Department of Agriculture had shilly-shallied-Martin directed the Embassy to pay the bills and charge Agriculture. Then he sent the Secretary of Agriculture a telegram saying, "I have done this and I am sure had you known about it you would have done the same thing." And the thing was finished. He was an amazing individual.

As far as that related to me in the political section, there were two things that were significant. One was that we began to have contacts with the MSI, the Italian Socialist movement, the neo-fascists, the Mussolini descendants, who have now more or less gone out of business. Giorgio Almirante was the Secretary-General of that party. They had been wanting to have contacts with the Embassy for some time, but the policy had been that we would not deal with the extreme left, the communists, and we would not deal with the extreme right. In any case, Almirante, through intermediaries, sent word to Martin that he would like to talk to somebody in the Embassy, and Martin, who had a somewhat conspiratorial streak himself said fine. He called me in one day and said, "Mr. So-and-so will be calling you to arrange an appointment for Mr. Almirante and you should see him." With great trepidation and misgivings I agreed to receive him. We had a chat which I must say I found extremely interesting, refreshing. He was, I guess, in many ways a rascal; he started out in life, as I recall, as a clown in a circus where I think his parents were. I found the conversation refreshing because I had the feeling that he was being completely honest. When I asked if his group was responsible for an incident here, an incident there, he was quite clear. One of them he said, "Well, not really," another one he said, "No," another, "No, that was done by So-and-so," one was done by his party but he said, "That was a dumb thing to do; I told him not to do it and it won't be repeated." So I found this kind of candor refreshing and he was also an engaging fellow. He came to the Embassy several times and we had our first meetings with the MSI, and I thought they were quite rewarding. He came to Washington once and asked me to lunch and I told him that I was sorry but I couldn't. He said, "Well, I understand and I will not embarrass you."

The other thing of significance was that under Martin we developed a coherent effort with the Christian Democratic Party, to try to get them to clean up their act. Over and over again, every time we met with somebody, on his instructions, we would say, "The DC (Christian Democrats) should stop doing this, get out of this, do so and so, disassociate yourself." I did this in every meeting I had.

Q: When you say disassociate yourself, disassociate yourself from what?

BARBOUR: Practices, individuals known to be corrupt-of course we didn't know how corrupt the whole system was at that point, although we were fairly clear that some in the DC were very corrupt. So every meeting I had, at his instructions it was to get across that message, that support from the United States will depend on the Christian Democratic Party improving its stature and its appeal to the voters and that means internal reform. Over and over again. Of course we did it not because we loved the Christian Democrats but because we feared inroads from the left. Obviously a weakened Christian Democratic party meant a weakened bulwark against the communists. So we had this as a coherent program throughout the last couple of years I was there.

Q: Graham Martin had the strength of his character but I have always thought of him as being "Louis the XI," the spider king sitting around there. I would think that as political counselor you would have had a hell of a time knowing what he was doing. I am told that when he came in he would read everything on your desk.

BARBOUR: Everything. He was enigmatic; he was disconcerting, he was upsetting, he was all kinds of things because he would roam around. I would be sitting at my desk and he would walk in and sit down beside me and ask, "What are you doing?" Then he would talk, that could be upsetting because he was not the kind of person that you were comfortable with. He was also disconcerting because he didn't sleep much and he would take everything home and read it late at night-the memcoms, the outgoing telegrams, this and that. Maybe three months later he would say, "But that's no what you said in your memcom of three months ago when you said such and such." It was something that kept one on one's toes. If there was something for him to sign in an outgoing telegram, I would take it in to him, hoping to drop it on his desk and say, "Here's the telegram about so-and-so," and get out. That rarely happened. He would say, "Sit down." Then he might put the telegram aside and talk about other things-probe, question, instruct. This was usually at lunch time and sometimes Bob ..?.., who was his staff aide, would bring in his lunch from the cafeteria and Martin would tell him to put it over there and continue. This might go on for another fifteen or twenty minutes, or half an hour, and the lunch was getting cold. I think he only ate lunch to keep alive. He seemed to have no interest in any sort of hedonistic pursuit; he was interested in people and power and zeroed in on them.

My relationship with him was, I must say, always very friendly. One day as I was about to go off and have lunch with an Under Secretary or somebody, he said, "I want you to tell him," and he ticked off five points all in the area of what to do within the party to straighten it out. We had lunch, we chatted, in the course of which I made the points, four of them at least. I went back and was writing my memcom when word came that the Ambassador wanted to see me. So I went in and he said, "Tell me about your lunch." So I did. "Did you tell him a, b, c, d?" "Yes sir." "Did you tell him e?" "No sir." He bridled, it got very cool, very frosty, which came quite easily to him. "Why not?" I took a deep gulp and said, "I forgot." And he laughed, to my astonishment. He said, "I was afraid you simply decided not to do what I told you to do." Well that was a great lesson.

Vis-a-vis the Christian Democratic Party, we became quite close to some of the reformers and were helpful to them. Some of the mavericks who were trying to do some dramatic things in the way of reform. Throwing out the old leadership, for example. We were quite sympathetic to them and helped them as much as we could.

Q: In the light of later and previous experience, did you find that Graham Martin had power in the Congress or the State Department that meant he could do his own thing more than others?

BARBOUR: When the telegram came back from the Secretary of Agriculture about paying the Agricultural Attaché's bill, it said exactly what it would have said if he had written it himself-"Thank you for your message, I appreciate what you have done; you were quite right." I said to Martin, "Well, you have won another one." He looked up with those steel gray eyes of his and said, "I don't go into these to lose." Another day-these conversations at lunch were frequently on how to be a successful Ambassador, why he was a successful Ambassador. It was not focused on him, just his thoughts, lots of rumination about how he should have been doing then what you're doing now. He took on people at any level because he worked for the President, the Secretary of State was an intermediary; he worked for the President, he was the President's representative. I forget the observation I made, something about going to the mat on issues and he said, "I don't really like these fights, but people think I do and therefore I don't lose very many." So these were all lessons in the exercise of power.

Q: As long as we are on Graham Martin, were there any things that you carried over in your later career that you found were lessons learned from Graham Martin.

BARBOUR: Subconsciously I suppose. I never thought before doing something how Graham Martin would have done something. The person I asked myself about most was Frank Malloy, how he would have handled it, because he handled the most difficult situations with great finesse and they always seemed to come out exactly the way he wanted them to with no breakage. With Martin it was things like before you do anything you have to get your facts right, be sure of your ground, and if you are sure of your ground don't run away from it. I guess that's the basic message. Don't pick fights unnecessarily, but if you're sure, go ahead. I would never have thechutzpah to take a sledge hammer to a cabinet secretary the way he would not hesitate to do. I think I may have told you the story about when the Vice President came to Bangkok. Johnson was Vice President and he gave a State dinner and the question was the Vice President's return toast. Martin said that he would give it as he was the representative of the President.

In Rome he did not have much respect for the Secretary of State, Mr. Rogers, because he was not a power wielder. The power in the administration in foreign affairs Martin quickly perceived, and this was very early on, was Henry Kissinger. So when Rogers came with Nixon the first time, he invited the Secretary to stay at the residence-maybe it was just the Secretary alone. A couple of days before the visit Martin went home and found people stringing wires in the residence. He asked what that was all about and was told they were putting in this and that for the Secretary. Martin said, "No, this is my house, he is my guest and there will be no stringing of wires in my house. If he is not comfortable here he is welcome to stay in a hotel." Which he did, Rogers did. On another occasion during a Nixon visit the Secretary rode in a car with Martin and Mrs. Rogers rode in a separate car with Mrs. Martin. At the airport the car drove up and the right hand door in the rear opened and the Secretary got in and sat on the right side. Martin hesitated a moment and did not go around, he climbed over him. The next time the car drove up and the right rear door opened, Martin was already in the seat and he did not budge. Ditto for Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Rogers. My wife and I went along with them for a sightseeing trip, when we pulled up to something to see Mrs. Martin stayed in the car, on the right side, and Mrs. Rogers got out on the left. That was his way of showing his, what he would call, proper seniority; he, I think, took pleasure in embarrassing the Secretary of State for whom he did not have a lot of respect. It was too bad, we all sympathized with the Secretary and Mrs. Rogers who did not bat an eye but must have been seething inside.

Q: Did you see at that time any connections between Kissinger and Graham Martin?

BARBOUR: No.

Q: Kissinger used to remark that when he went to Italy he found no one to talk to there. It was sort of a collegial type government which was friendly but that was all.

BARBOUR: To jump ahead, he had a lot of respect for Graham Martin. He obviously admired somebody who could be as ruthless in the exercise of power as he could be. When the time came in 1973 to change Ambassadors in Vietnam, Kissinger, who was National Security Advisor, said in a meeting apropos of the Ambassador, "Let's send that cold-eyed fellow, Graham Martin." And indeed, as I told you, his eyes were like steel. I liked him, he was always very courteous to me and my wife, very warm; I have very fond memories of him but I also have memories of a good deal of trepidation every time I was summoned into his presence. It was always, now what have I done wrong. My relationship with him was instructive, entertaining, amazing-I couldn't believe some of the things he used to do as Ambassador.

Q: How did his method of operation work on members of your political section? Sometimes if you are close and understand how it works it is acceptable, but if you are one or two removed it can cause problems. Did this have any effect on them?

BARBOUR: No, the one who bore the brunt of it was the DCM, Wells Stabler, who had a difficult job at times running the Embassy because he didn't know what the Ambassador had done or said or wanted. Their relationship was not very cordial.

Q: You left Rome in 1972 and where did you go?

BARBOUR: I went to the Royal College of Defense Studies in London, the former Imperial Defense College, for exactly one calendar year, from January 1972 to January 1973. It was a very stimulating, a very stimulating year, extremely agreeable and intellectually rewarding. Probably one of the most agreeable years I had in the Foreign Service.

Q: This was mainly British military?

BARBOUR: Yes, we were approximately sixty in the class. Of that sixty probably forty were British military from all the services, some civil servants, one or two foreign office, other ministries; the rest were non-British from the Commonwealth-New Zealand, Australia, Nigeria, Ghana-some non-Commonwealth-Iran, Greece, other NATO, Belgium, four Americans, three uniformed and one not. It was a small group; I was number fifty-five, almost at the end. We met for lecture usually at ten o'clock in the morning, a nice hour to begin. The course year was divided into British institutions, economic policies, world trends and strategies. The purpose was to take the up and coming British officer, they were mostly brigadiers, who were going on to other things and get them out of the trenches, so to speak. Most of them had public school backgrounds, public school and academy, but not university. Amazingly well informed in certain areas-imagine these rough and tumble brigadiers writing messages in Greek back and forth, quoting in Latin. Very articulate but largely unread after a certain level. For two years they had had a civilian intellectual, well known, son of the author of The Thirty-Nine Steps...

Q: Buchan.

BARBOUR: Buchan. Alastair Buchan had been the commandant, the first civilian, and he had applied to the college the intellectual strictures of the university. That had caused enormous unrest among these people who were much more accustomed to doing war games and maneuvers and fighting, I suppose, than they were to reading and especially writing a paper. Even more so to writing a paper that had to be of publishable quality. So after two years of Mr. Buchan they went to the other extreme and put in as commandant a four-star Army general, a soldier through and through, General Sir Merlin Butler. "Tubby" he was known as, not to his face, who was a soldier's soldier. Three martinis before lunch with his men; if he didn't like the lecture he would get up and walk out. So it was a totally different kind of environment. We were a mixed group. After our lecture we would break into syndicates to work on projects; each syndicate had a rapporteur and he reported to your colleagues in groups of six or eight whatever your project was. I think it was really an oral essay, which would then be discussed. Stimulating, especially if you didn't know anything about the subject. I was the rapporteur for the group on "The Role of Sterling as a Reserve Currency." I hadn't the slightest idea what the role of sterling was as a reserve currency, but I was the rapporteur so I did the report on it. It was a year like that.

And we took trips, an industrial tour of Scotland-the only time in my life that I went down into a coal mine-we visited the service academies, visited ships at sea, did a buoy transfer from a frigate to a LSD and crossed the choppy channel, we visited the BAR in Northern Germany (the British Army of the Rhine) where they did various exercises for us. I was standing next to an Australian navy captain as the troops were doing a gun drill. I said, "What happens if they drop one," and he said, "You don't see it." Then Berlin and the British forces there. Then a five week tour that we could pick ourselves-South America, North America, Western Europe, Far East-I choose the Eastern Mediterranean. We spent a week-we had our own rather small aircraft-in Cyprus, Israel, Jordan, Turkey and Romania, in all those places the guest of the local armed forces. Fascinating! So it was an exciting and stimulating year. I wrote a paper, my paper that I had to turn in at the end called "Europe and the United States: Unity Versus Alliance?" which they published to my great pleasure.

The thing that really bothered me though, that I found worrisome, was that they had to write an evaluation on every student. The Brits have the inconvenient tradition of writing honest evaluations, they can say critical things and at that time they could say critical things about one's wife. They didn't hesitate: Mr. Jones cannot spell, Mr. Jones writes very badly, Mr. Jones's tie is always crooked. They could say whatever they thought relevant to his career prospects, but it would not be damaging to the extent it is in ours. If Mr. Smith is a promising candidate but cannot spell he would be yanked out and taught to spell and put back into the stream to go on. So the thought of them writing a candid evaluation of their American student was not something I welcomed; I much would have preferred that they write an American style one. The fact that I sometimes didn't make it to the morning lecture before 10:10, as the commandant remarked one day when I arrived, I thought might be something that they would choose to observe. But they didn't; it worked out okay. Nonetheless, that was always a little cloud on the horizon. Fortunately they were not as honest as they might have been.

Q: Was there a British military mindset that you found interesting or that gave you help later on in understanding how another power looks at things?

BARBOUR: One thing was that I did not really know what a class society the British society is. The group I was with was a class group; they represented a certain class. Some of them represented a higher element within it, very society oriented, but those who came from working class backgrounds were no longer working class. One with whom I became very good friends, an admiral, was born into a very poor family but somehow a wealthy man took an interest in him as a boy and saw to it that he went to a good public school. The result was that when he left there with the right accent, the right education, the right formation, he was more or less alienated from his family, they no longer spoke the same language. The other thing was that these were people who had a very broad perspective, they could converse, and they did converse, some of them quite eloquently, on the subjects of interest to them. Although I said that they didn't read after a certain period they had enough of a basic culture, a deep and very broad cultural endowment, so that they were very impressive individuals.

Q: How did they view the United States and our role?

BARBOUR: So far as I could tell the United States was for them a given, their closest ally, a country with which they were accustomed to working, some had been on exchange programs and in joint headquarters. We were a given; I did not detect any time snide remarks. We were viewed as a friend and ally.

Q: I assume at the time you were looking at the Soviet Union as the enemy?

BARBOUR: Oh yes, that was a factor. It was the obvious and common enemy. But the course did not focus on the Soviet Union, it was much broader than that. This period of world problems and strategies, whatever it was called, was a very broad one; I remember we had one week devoted to Southern Africa. Another one on the Middle East in which our Iranian General, in the midst of a briefing we were having at Channel Command Headquarters, a very distinguished group of three and four star British officers, got up and said, "It is not the gulf, it is the Persian Gulf."

Q: Then you left there and came back to Washington?

BARBOUR: Yes, to be Director of the Office of Iberian Affairs. I went in to see Joan Clark, the Executive Director for EUR, on my first day there and she asked, "Have you heard what is happening to you?" My first reaction was Vietnam, but I said that I hadn't heard. "You are being considered for special assistant to the new Under Secretary." I said then, and maintained throughout, that I would rather be office director for Iberian Affairs. It didn't turn out that way. I made clear to Ambassador Porter when I met with him a couple of times...

Q: This was which Porter?

BARBOUR: William J. Porter. I made clear that I was quite happy at the prospect of staying in EUR, that he needn't think I was looking for a job. I told Walter Stoessel, who was the Assistant Secretary who kept the Iberian job open for me for some time, that I hoped he would arrange for me to remain with him. In my last meeting I said to Ambassador Porter, whom I did not know at all, as he sat behind his desk looking over his glasses, "I hope you understand that I am really quite content to remain in EUR, but if you want me to come here, of course I will." He said, "Well, I do." That was that. I moved up to work with him for almost exactly a calendar year; he was a wonderful man, what a stimulating year. He died a few years ago; I have nothing but admiration and respect and great affection for him as a diplomat and a human being.

Q: How did the Under Secretary operate in those days, we are talking about 1973?

BARBOUR: He was essentially what he still is, Under Secretary for Political Affairs.

Q: How did Porter operate in that job?

BARBOUR: Seventh floor at that time consisted of Rogers as Secretary, Kenneth Rush, Deputy Secretary, Porter, Under Secretary for Political Affairs and Bill Casey, Under Secretary for Economic Affairs. Porter took to that job his well known credentials for candor, one hundred and fifty percent intellectual honesty, moral courage, delightful sense of humor, a great facility for writing which was amazing because he was not a college graduate. I think he had never even gone to college, he was largely self-educated. Brought up by his widowed mother who had immigrated from England, raised in Boston. He was a self-made man, a wonderful person. How did he operate? The way they do now, I think.

Q: Was Kissinger Secretary of State by that time?

BARBOUR: No, Kissinger was still National Security Advisor in the White House.

Q: How did Porter deal with the Rogers-Kissinger business?

BARBOUR: It was very awkward. Rogers was the Secretary of State; he was a distinguished, honorable, honest man who took an interest in the Foreign Service. But he was in the position of being constantly embarrassed and humiliated by Kissinger. Things that Kissinger in his book acknowledges and regrets, but admits that he treated Rogers very badly. Rogers was constantly being cut off. I remember when I was in London we watched the Nixon visit to Beijing on television, this was 1972, and I noticed that in the meeting with Mao Rogers was not present; it was just the President and Kissinger. I told my mates at that time that if I were Secretary of State under those circumstances, I would resign. But he kept going and frequently unburdened himself to Porter. Porter was an individual who needed no external props but did like to have somebody to talk to and I was that person, I guess. We developed a very close relationship; although I had his confidence, he left a lot of things to me, I never ever interposed myself between his staff, which was the Department of State, and him. It is a great mistake to try and take decisions that need to be taken later on. Since he wanted someone to talk to, he would frequently come back and talk about his meetings with the Secretary and what the Secretary had told him, especially after an episode.

Porter himself dealt with Kissinger because Kissinger as National Security Advisor did not rank as cabinet level and frequently dealt with Porter. Porter would represent the Department at meetings with Kissinger; he dreaded them, he hated them because he found it impossible not to express his opinion if he disagreed. Kissinger did not appreciate it. He would come back from meetings at the White House and I would ask, "How was the meeting? How was Kissinger today?" And he would say, "Vile." But Kissinger respected him; he may have disliked having him around but he did respect him and showed it. You could be at odds with Kissinger in a number of ways, but if you were at odds and he didn't respect you, you were gone, if you were at odds and he did respect you, you were taken care of, as was proven later. Porter was very loyal to the Secretary; he tried to serve him, he tried to encourage him, he tried to support him. His job was to try and support the Secretary of State in his relations with Kissinger. And he did, which of course put him in a difficult situation at times.

Q: Why do you think Secretary Rogers put up with this? From all accounts he was a very honorable man and a fine man. There reaches a point where ...

BARBOUR: Well, who knows. I think one reason was that Rogers was a personal friend of Nixon and his first relations with Nixon as President were probably cordial and constructive. So there was that; he was an old personal friend of Nixon, had been his Attorney General, you remember. The other thing must be that he did like the office. He did at one time set in motion a kind of peace process in the Middle East which looked promising for a brief period. So I guess he liked the office and he was in the end, you know, dismissed. After the appointment of Kissinger as Secretary it was quite obvious that there were going to be a lot of changes but no one knew what they were. I was walking down to the Under Secretary's suite, down the main corridor, one day and I saw General Haig sitting in the Secretary's private waiting room and I asked Porter, "What is Haig doing in the Secretary's office?" He didn't know. Well what he was doing was asking for his resignation.

Kissinger came over, I think this was in August of 1973, and we knew the good days were past. So little by little he began to make changes, announced in his press conferences, and that is how those affected knew of them, whether they were in or out. It happened that by the end of the year, and I don't remember if this was his first press conference, he wanted Joe Sisco to be his Under Secretary, but he wouldn't tell him and he wouldn't appoint him. Sisco, at that time the head of NEA (Near Eastern Affairs) and who had been on the receiving end of countless gibes and barbs from Porter asking awkward questions about Middle Eastern affairs, desperately wanted the job but was not certain he was going to get it. So Joe Sisco, who had been a player in Washington for a long time, announced that he had accepted the Presidency of a small college—that was to force Kissinger's hand. Finally Kissinger called Porter and explained that he had to have Joe Sisco. This was after... Porter one day called to see Ken Rush and came back and called me in and said, "You know I always said I would never take another Embassy, that there was only one that I really wanted because it was close to home. That's Canada and I have been offered it and I told them I would take it." It was only after that that Kissinger told him that he had to have Joe Sisco for Middle Eastern affairs because of his close personal relationship. So that is how Porter left and went to Canada.

He was a man of such integrity, the barbs he used to send Joe Sisco were awkward because Porter knew a lot about the Middle East. He spoke Arabic and seemed to have an affinity for dealing with people there. The incoming telegrams from various places frequently cropped up in his little notes, and then I would have to take them to Sisco. The messenger was as much the problem in Sisco's eyes as the originator. I remember one of the issues concerned arms for the Shah. The Shah had an insatiable appetite for state of the art weapons. In one telegram he explained that he had to have more Phantom F-4's because of their long legs. Porter penciled in the side of this thing that I was to take down to Sisco, "and what are these long legs for?" Meaning, other countries in the Persian Gulf. So he ruled up there briefly but candidly. The meetings in Porter's office never went more than twenty minutes. They were usually problem solving; each party to the problem would state its case, there would be a discussion and Porter would decide. At the end of twenty minutes he would grow very restless and meetings didn't go on. I remember one day there was a proposal that would involve an Embassy officer working for somebody else, he would perform a function in a role that was not part of the diplomatic post, as somebody else. The Agency wanted this fellow to do something for them. They came over, I forget whether it was Bill Colby who knew and liked Porter, and they made their proposal and Porter heard the Assistant Secretary who was more or less in support of it; both of them urged him to agree. Porter paused about one millimeter of a second and said, "It stinks. The answer is no." He was right I think. That is the way he conducted business. "Let's get on with it," he would say; decisions were not things that he shied away from even when he knew they were going to be unpopular.

Q: You mentioned the matter of arms for the Shah of Iran. It seems that Nixon and Kissinger absolutely collapsed in front of the Shah. Whatever you want, you can have; with lots of repercussions later on. We put too many American personnel in there; the whole thing was destabilizing.

BARBOUR: Porter, of course, was not hostile to the Shah but he constantly questioned why we were building him up, why we were encouraging his external ambitions. He thought that...

Q: All right, we were just mentioning in the last part about the Shah and his insatiable desire for arms.

BARBOUR: Well, of course, reservations arose from the external aspects. We did not see why Iran needed such a large strategic capability. That was his constant quibble, I'd say. Also, he thought that some of the people who were dealing with Middle Eastern affairs, didn't know anything about the Middle East. Each episode was an opening for his sharp pen. His observations were quite acute.

Q: Of course, Joe Sisco did a lot in the Middle East, but he certainly wasn't an expert in the area.

BARBOUR: He knew how to muster Washington behind the policy, I suppose.

Q: What did Porter think about, I mean getting away from the personalities, what did he think about Nixon and Kissinger? They played a very active role in the foreign policy.

BARBOUR: Kissinger pressed onward because Kissinger was constantly cutting across lines, in wanting to give instructions to the Department. I remember I was in Porter's office one day when Kissinger called, I forget what the subject was, but Porter disagreed, and said so. The conversation was, "No, Henry, no I don't think so. No, I just don't agree, I don't think that's the right way. No, I wouldn't do that." Of course, those were not the kinds of responses that Kissinger wanted or liked. They did, as I said, command respect. To be sure, when the time came to move Porter, and out he was moved, it was done with a certain amount of grace, far more than was true in other cases.

Q: When Porter left, did you leave too?

BARBOUR: No, that conversation where he said that he had been offered the one post that he had agreed to take, by saying, "Well, how about it Bob, want to go to Canada?" And I didn't answer. I changed the subject, because, I didn't. Then it came up again a few days later, "Want to go?" And I ducked. We had been to Canada because of the Vietnam conflict which was still going on, Canada was the key player in the international. They were wavering, whether they should do it. So Porter and I flew up to Ottawa, and met with Michael Sharp, I think his name was, the Canadian Foreign Minister. Late one night, almost at midnight in his little office in the Department and he discussed Vietnam, and we went back to the DCM's house, his name was Johnson, and I used his little typewriter and did the memcon right there that night, and the next morning flew back to the Department. I did Porter's memo to the President saying we had the clear impression the Canadians were going to pull out. In Fact, about three weeks later they announced they were pulling out. Your question was how he related to, that was an aside.

Q: What did he think of the general policy of Nixon, and Kissinger, trying to find detente with the Soviet Union?

BARBOUR: He was on board, so to speak, on all those policies, he was a very loyal supporter of the policies. It was his loyalty that caused him to be so forthright when he thought they were wrong. He did not criticize personally either Nixon or Kissinger, unless he thought Kissinger got out of line. But his problem came in being caught in the middle, which he sometimes was. He had the great personal strength of leaving every night at 7:00, which was not well viewed outside the Department. I remember a number of times as I was clearing up after him, at 7:15 or 7:30, Scowcroft would call, Colby would call wanting to speak to him and he wasn't there. He was a loyal servant of the crown, so to speak, but frequently in a difficult position.

Q: Then what happened to you with Porter leaving?

BARBOUR: When Porter left, I think it was January 1973, I went down to be director of performance evaluation...

Q: ... of '74.

BARBOUR: Excuse me, 1974, yes...director of performance evaluation under the Director General, Nat Davis, and one of the really smart things I've really ever done was to get him to agree that I wouldn't have to stay there more than a year. And at the end of a year to the day I went up to see him-no, it was about three weeks before, and said I'd like to leave, and I had arranged to be DCM in Beirut under Mac Godley who had called me a year earlier. Nat Davis was astonished, but he kept his promise, agreed and let me depart.

Q: Okay, we'll pick it up here, then we move to what?

BARBOUR: We'll skip that year which is all personnel.

Q: Okay, unless we can talk a little about the personnel situation.

BARBOUR: I'll think about it.

Q: Today is October 12th, 1994. Bob let's talk a bit about personnel. You went into Personnel when?

BARBOUR: It was with the departure of Ambassador Porter as Under Secretary for Political Affairs which was at the beginning about March as I recall, 1974. At that time Nat Davis was Director General. Have we done that?

Q: I think we've done that. We're up to around 1972, I think. What were you doing in Personnel?

BARBOUR: I went there as director of performance evaluation. Everyone is supposed to spend some time in management, and he asked me to go into that job because he wanted to try desperately to improve the evaluation system in the Foreign Service. As everyone knows it is the paper record that is the least reliable. It's the oral reputation that counts, and he had hoped that we would be able to introduce a greater degree of candor into it. Also, at that time, the selection boards had slipped for several years and promotion lists were coming out about two years later than they previously had. So his objective was to try to improve the evaluation process, and mine was to try to get the boards back on schedule. Not a world shaking situation except for me personally it was the first real management experience I had ever had after even then 25 years in the Foreign Service I had never managed anything of any consequence except one very small post. But it was interesting in that the office was made up of Civil Service permanent employees, and Foreign Service officers. There's a very different psychology, at least there was at that time, between the two, at least as I saw it. Civil Service employees are very good people, knew their jobs, and worked at that time from 8:45 to 5:30. The Foreign Service concept was you came in and stayed until you did your job, and then went home. Anyhow, it was a problem of welding the two components together, trying to put something better into evaluation system than existed, which we did by revising the form and put in at that time that the famous or infamous paragraph 4-C, which still exists, of areas for improvement. Not a giant step forward.

Q: Areas for improvement was an effort to give something of a critical nature to somebody, rather than just laudatory.

BARBOUR: That's right. Having not long before spent a year in London, well, in fact, I found the British evaluation reports were very candid, and could criticize an officer without damaging him. I thought maybe it would be nice to introduce something like that into the Foreign Service system. As I said, it hasn't had a dramatic input, so to speak, but it's still there. The idea is that somebody will once in a while be honest, and say that this officer is an excellent officer with great potential, but he does need to improve his writing, or the way he deals with people, or timeliness, or something like that. Once in a while they do that, and once in a while it has the desired effect. The officer improves, and goes on about his business, and his career.

We also added the rebuttal invitation with a somewhat Machiavellian purpose on the one hand to give an officer who was criticized a chance to rebut the criticism if he chose to do so, and sometimes they do it very well. But we removed the length that the permitted statement, which meant that an officer who felt very strongly could write on page after page after page if he or she so chose, and such a response would be very revealing.

Q: In a way it's considered by many to be a trap.

BARBOUR: I don't want to use that word, but in fact a fervent rebuttal that goes on page after page after page, is not to the credit of the individual who engages in it. And that was the intent. If the rating officer said this individual has a problem getting along with people, and the rated officer then takes five pages to explain why that is not at all true, we've accomplished our purpose. That's still there. But it was not a great year, for me personally it was very good managerial experience. We did conclude the boards two months ahead of the previous year, got them back on schedule, and I did thereupon departed Personnel.

Q: So you then went to European Affairs where you served from '75 to '78. What were you doing?

BARBOUR: Well, in fact, there's one little diversion that I want to mention. One of the few wise things I've done in this business, is to get Nat Davis to agree that I would stay only one year in that job in Personnel, and go on to something else. At the end of the year I told him I wanted to leave. He was astonished, but I telephoned Mac Godley in Beirut who was still without a DCM, and he said, "Yes, by all means come." So I intended to do so, but various friends kept telling me not to go to Beirut. Not because of Ambassador Godley who is a splendid person, but they said Beirut, and particularly true of David Korn, who I must say a precinct, "Beirut is going to be by the end of next year our worst Middle East problem. Beirut is going to go up in flames, and there's going to be all kinds of crises there." At the same time the European Bureau was very anxious for me to come back, as director for Western European Affairs, which is something I wanted very much to do.

But to make a long story short, Mac Godley left, he was replaced by Frank Meloy, an old old friend whose DCM I would have enjoyed being. But after I'd been back in European Affairs for a while, Frank Meloy was assassinated along with his DCM. I guess, had I been there, I would have been that unfortunate DCM. So, I didn't go. Godley left shortly thereafter anyway. I went back to the Bureau of European Affairs as Director for Western Europe quite happily.

Q: What were the main concerns in this '75 to '78 period for Western European Affairs?

BARBOUR: The Office of Western European Affairs, somewhat misleading of course, because we didn't have all of western Europe by any means. We had only France, Italy, Malta and the Benelux countries. The main concern at that time-there were two, one was France cooperation, or lack thereof, and Italy the nature and stability of the Christian Democratic Government. France, at that time with Giscard d'Estaing as President, was once again asserting itself in ways that we found uncomfortable. I remember the first issue that came up while I was there was the IAEA, the site of the IAEA. Anyhow, it was a great problem. International Atomic Energy Agency, now in Vienna. It was a problem, somewhat technical, intensely political as everything else was. And that was my prelude to my return to Western European Affairs.

In Italy the government of then...I forget whether it was Aldo or T\_\_\_ Moro, but they came and they went all in the same family, as you know. It was always a question for us of the extent to which they would coopt the Communist Party and increasingly legitimize it, or sprinkle it with their own version of holy water. As it turns out they were doing so to a much greater degree than anybody knew, but that's a different story.

Q: Just a question on Italy at that time because we're now having this discussion in 1994, and the corruption of the Christian Democratic Party became a major issue and caused sort of an earthquake in the Italian political affairs just last year or so. Was corruption of the Christian Democrats at all a concern, or not at that time?

BARBOUR: It was a concern then and within the next couple of years it became a much greater, and more pressing concern. But there was corruption in the sense of not payoffs and things like that although everybody knew about, gave them an envelope and that took care of it. We did not know the extent to which that was being engaged in as a macro level by the party secretaries. There were always rumors of this. Of course, every party had its payoff. [A payoff] was the Socialist bank according to them, and other main and major banks who were tied in with the Christian Democrats, they each had its television channel. It was a kind of apportioning of the publicly controlled entities among the parties, more from the Socialists than into the right. We didn't know the communists were officially and structurally part of that as well. But it was always a problem with Italy, and of course we wanted to be nice to the Italians. They are and always have been very faithful allies, but sometimes we felt there were a lot of things we could not give them, participation support, etc. So it was always this kind of very friendly relationship, with a certain amount of game playing on their part, and our trying more or less to be responsive on our side. The big factor was that the then ambassador, Volpe, enjoyed the favor of Henry Kissinger who was Secretary of State, was very close to him.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BARBOUR: John A. Volpe, he then had his residence on Sixteenth Street, across from Spanish embassy. Kissinger liked him and the relationship was good. Of course, that made life much easier at the desk level. The French ambassador, who did not have the personality of some of his predecessors, and therefore didn't use his job the way some of his predecessors had, didn't have the access of some of his predecessors. But relations were reasonably tranquil, and it was just a tremendous job of managing the conduct of business, the day-to-day business with those countries with whom the volume of business was enormous.

And then we had the Benelux countries, my first experience with them. The Dutch ambassador, very well known in the Dutch diplomatic service, an intellectual, not an easy person to get along with. His staff and his colleagues viewed him with awe. As I recall he'd been in Moscow and went from here to Paris. But a very senior, a very prestigious member of the Dutch diplomatic establishment. My introduction to dealing with the Dutch made much more of an impact in return than dealing with things French and Italian. I remember well the first time I called as office director, and went out to call on the Dutch Ambassador. He'd see me very courteously, very cordially, and after about five minutes he said, "Tell me, what would you think if a foreign government invited a cabinet member from the United States to visit its capital, and then refused to receive him?" I was, needless to say, somewhat taken aback. I really wasn't sure what he was talking about. It turned out that we had in Washington a junior minister from the Dutch cabinet who had invited himself to Washington, and was unsuccessfully busy trying to get in to see people at the cabinet level. He was minister for cooperation, I think, and we thought that's the director of AID, go see the director of AID, that's that. No sir, he wanted to see the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Treasury, and wasn't getting very far. So that's what it turned out...he'd not been invited, he was not a senior member, and the Dutch ambassador was trying very hard to push his case. I did finally succeed in getting him an appointment with the Deputy Secretary, and it was memorable conversation because of the three countries in the world who are given to lecturing-the first, I guess, are the Indians, the next two are the United States, and third is the Benelux.

Q: I would put the Canadians probably.

BARBOUR: Oh, really. I don't know, I haven't dealt with the Canadians. Anyhow, the meeting with the Deputy Secretary was one in which this junior minister proceeded to lecture him. So that was my dealings with the Dutch. Anyhow, it was fun while it lasted.

Q: A question about France. Was it sort of the attitude, the French are going to go their own way, if the chips are down they'll be on our side if we really need them. I mean, just sort of shrug your shoulders and say, viva la French. Was that the attitude?

BARBOUR: It was an ambivalent relationship, and very strong in both directions. I don't recall specific issues in those early days, but French cooperation in public forum could never be assumed, or at least it would be grudging, or at least there would be a price for it. It was just in the nature of things French at that time. On the other hand, Henry Kissinger kept in very close personal contact using channels that did not go through the bureau of European Affairs, and I assume Art Hartman was aware of what was going on, but I'm not certain.

Q: Art Hartman was...

BARBOUR: ...the Assistant Secretary. Those transactions which were extensive, were rather intimate. Not necessarily warmly cordial, but they were very candid, they were very frank, and they were conducted on the basis between colleagues. As I recall, Jabore, was the Foreign Minister when I started. Jabore was a very prickly person, rather to the left of the French establishment—well, no, I take that back. He was paradoxical, not at all fond of the United States. Whether he was a left Gaullist or just a pure Gaullist, I'm not sure, I don't recall, but he was always difficult for us to deal with. Always seemed to go out of his way to have something uncomplimentary to say. So relations with France were extensive, intensive, and sometimes problematical. But I don't remember any specific issues that came up in the way of crisis at that time. I remember much more in dealing with the Dutch.

Q: At a certain point you became the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western and Southern Europe, basically just more responsibility but within the same framework that you'd been dealing with before?

BARBOUR: In the meantime the Office of Western European Affairs had undergone a change. With the revolution in Portugal in the spring of 1975...

Q: Was this within your province?

BARBOUR: No, it was not, but two things were going on in the Office of Liberian Affairs. One was we were renegotiating a base agreement, another was that Portugal underwent a dramatic, if bloodless, revolution in the hands of people who wanted to move it very far left. People who were, as it turned out, much more harmless than they seemed, but they seemed at the time to be almost fuzzy Maoist in the things they said, and the things they said they wanted to do. Anyhow, it was a major crisis for us, that Portugal was a major crisis for us. That office was overwhelmed. At the same time we were negotiating a base agreement in Spain that was not going extremely well, and there were an awful lot of leaks coming out of the American delegation and being printed in the American newspapers. The result was, they decided to incorporate Spain and Portugal into the Office of Western European Affairs, and I gave up Benelux. So Spain and Portugal came onto my particular scene, and demanded far more time in those days than France and Italy had.

Q: From interviews, and almost corridor talk, but one of the great stories of the Foreign Service of this period, was this whole Portuguese thing, where you had the Secretary of State and a very active ambassador, Frank Carlucci was sent out there, who were quite in disagreement on how to go. Could you talk about what you saw, both when you dealing actively with it, and also from the sidelines about this.

BARBOUR: Portugal was generating a lot of anguish in Washington. Frank Carlucci went out, was there when Portugal and Spain came into Western European Affairs. I had never met him.

Q: He was basically sent out to replace what was considered a sort of weak team out there, if I recall. I think we had a political ambassador, and a DCM who was not very strong.

BARBOUR: We were taken by surprise. Of course, they weren't the only ones. CIA was just about to close its office at that very time, saying nothing here is going to happen, its not worth it. Frank came over from HEW where he was Under Secretary, I think, and went out to Lisbon. A lot had transpired when I came onto the scene, I had never met him. But it is true that he and Kissinger saw things differently. Carlucci's position was more or less, ride it out. Ride it out, don't over react, it may not be as bad as it looks as though its going to be. That was the position he had taken before I came on that scene, so I hope I'm doing him justice.

Q: That was my understanding, that Kissinger at least verbally was making all sorts of threats. I mean not what we could do, but we were huffing and puffing.

BARBOUR: We were quite worried because all the things they were saying, it was wild and woolly leftist stuff.

Q: These were young officers.

BARBOUR: These were young officers, headed by...I've forgotten their names. Then you had the Portuguese communist party which had been I guess illegal for a long time, certainly prominent on the scene in the hands of a real Stalinist who made no bones about it. I don't mean communist, Stalinist, he went down being a Stalinist and he's still alive today, I'm sure he still is the last one in Europe.

In the meantime, the Azores were giving us lots and lots of concern because of an Azorean independence movement. It wanted to break away from pro-communist Portugal and attach themselves to the United States, or at least under the American umbrella. And it wasn't only awkward politically, but we had an important base in the Azores, Terciera Island, the largest. And the Azorean movement was to some degree financed by wealthy Portuguese Americans. So they were saying things that caused some people to bite their fingernails, and the revolutionaries in Portugal were saying other things, remove the rest of the fingernails, or generate other kinds of worries. Anyhow, Frank was there and not on the same wave length with Kissinger. So he came back on consultation, I'd been in the job briefly, and Frank came home on Sunday night. I shall never forget meeting him at National Airport. My introduction to Frank was, that he had lost his credit card and had to pay for something at the airport, so I lent him my Visa card, and I had the job of telling him the Secretary wanted to see him Monday morning, and he was mad at him. Oh well, Frank is not bothered by that.

Anyhow, the revolution continued for a while, and then gradually the leadership changed and appeared to become less inflammatory, but still revolutionary. Abolishing this, and abolishing that, and instituting this, and instituting that. I don't remember the many, many details of every day life with the Portuguese revolution. But I do know that in time it became less inflammatory. The first leader to come here, I think, was a Major, who came to Washington and was received by Kissinger, received suitably. They had a long conversation, and then at the end of the meeting met privately.

Carlucci meanwhile had reached out to these people, and had developed all kinds of contacts with them. I don't mean that he was sympathizing with them, but he was in touch with them, and so was his embassy. They did some excellent reporting during that period. First hand reporting, what was going on and how people were thinking, etc. And then there came a break with...well, a little counterrevolution developed, an admiral took it over. An admiral was in the streets with his people, and the embassy, I must say, was in the streets with him, and Carlucci was in the embassy. We were in close touch with him. So I wrote a telegram with instructions to Carlucci saying, "Go see the Admiral, or get in touch with the Admiral, and tell him various things, the meaning of which was, he enjoys our sympathy and support. I was office director still, we went up to see Kissinger who wanted to talk about that. And he said, "But does he know that we are with him?" I had the great pleasure of saying, "Mr. Secretary, the telegram is on your desk," as indeed there was. And literally he went over, and by George, there it was. So we embraced this new counterrevolution.

Q: Had it already achieved power by that time?

BARBOUR: No, it had not.

Q: Were we taking sides?

BARBOUR: We were indeed taking sides, very clearly. Fortunately they won.

Q: I was just going to say, it's always a dangerous period.

BARBOUR: It is, but we wanted there to be no doubt, and we also believed obviously that awareness of American backing would be a factor and support. Anyhow, they won. Came the change and Mario Suarez became Prime Minister. I had been to see him several times in Lisbon with Carlucci, who had very close relations with him. Carlucci spoke Portuguese, Suarez, I think, spoke nothing but Portuguese. They had established a very close relationship before Suarez came back into power. So when he did become Prime Minister, we were very well installed. Suarez came to Washington as Prime Minister and I remember there was a dinner at the Portuguese embassy. He arrived, his wife had a full length mink coat. I said to my wife, "I think we're going to like Socialists like this." These are the right kinds of socialists. He turned out to be not only a good Prime Minister, but very friendly towards the United States. Carlucci had said consistently he would be, and Kissinger doubted it.

Q: Was the Bureau of European Affairs, in your role in this, were you playing sort of a buffer between Carlucci and Kissinger. What was the attitude?

BARBOUR: No, I don't think it ever came to that. Kissinger respected Carlucci, and he sometimes felt like hitting him over the head with a baseball bat, but he did respect him.

Q: Carlucci came in a way with his own Washington power base, didn't he?

BARBOUR: Well, he was Weinberger's deputy. But I think it was just the integrity he demonstrated as ambassador, and his constant energy, and the fact that he had had the courage to say things to Washington that Washington really didn't want to hear. Washington was much more prepared to be told how desperate these people were, and how awful things were going to be. But Carlucci, to his great credit as a person, and as a diplomat, maintained a very steady course, as I said from the beginning, ride with it, it'll probably work out, it isn't going to be as bad as they say they're going to be. And in the end of it, he was fully vindicated.

Q: How about with the Spanish side? About the Azores? How did you fend off these separatists?

BARBOUR: With the change in the political climate on the mainland, the separatist movement lost its steam, and lost its whole reason for being. I might tell one little story about Portugal before we move on. Before the actual counterrevolution took to the streets in Lisbon, there crumbling around the edges. The poor Portuguese ambassador there was having a terrible time because he was trying to be loyal to his country, to a government to which he had no sympathy whatsoever. He got very few communications. Sometimes he wasn't paid, and he wasn't able to pay his staff. The revolutionaries were simply waiting until they had full power to make all the changes. So he was here at the end of a very long, very dry pipeline in terms of both information and money. So he relied on us in the Department to sort of tell him what was going on. One day there was a ticker item about a farmers demonstration in a little town in the northern part of Portugal, in which they had burned down the local communist party headquarters building. So I called the Ambassador, and gave him a little summary, and I said in such-and-such village the farmers have burned down the building that is used for the communist party headquarters. And there was a little pause, and he said, "Oh, oh, oh, that building belongs to my father-in-law." And then he said, "But he won't mind." He was a splendid man.

Q: How about with the Spanish and the base negotiations. Franco was still in power at that point?

BARBOUR: Yes, Franco was still in power. The Spaniards wanted a closer military relationship than we were prepared to give them. And they demonstrated this desire in various requests for consultations, for planning, for this or for that, and there was a difference between the Pentagon and State over these issues. Not a very big difference. But the Pentagon was more disposed to be conciliatory as much as possible, and State, being aware of Congressional attitudes toward Franco, was the defender of her(?). We had made a mistake, I think, in letting the American Air Force commander in Spain, the senior negotiator, so there were periodic inter-agency problems that had to be reconciled. But they were not major, they were moving along slowly, and they came to a conclusion that fall in New York when the Spanish Foreign Minister came, met with Kissinger in New York for the final conclusion of the negotiations. At issue were a lot of a) whether it would be a treaty, or an executive agreement. The Spaniards wanted a treaty, we thought a treaty would never get through the Senate. We wanted an executive agreement, and a couple of other things. These final meetings in New York, with Wells Stabler as the ambassador, was also present. And the Foreign Minister, who had been ambassador in Paris, and looked like a 16th century Goliath painting, I've forgotten his name. His staff lived in terror of him. They negotiated the final issues just sitting across from each other. One was the amount of aid they wanted, a grant aid, we had offered them 10 and they wanted 20 or something. I remember Kissinger saying, "Well, if we're giving them 10 I suppose we can make it 15," and that was done. Then they got on to the subject of there's \$15 million per year grant, plus all the other things. Then they got on the subject of a treaty which the Spaniards wanted more because obviously it's more senior standing. Kissinger made the point that, "If I propose a treaty to the Senate, the streets will be full of people." The Foreign Minister looked him straight in the eye and said, "As ambassador in Paris, I've had the streets really full of angry people, they don't bother me." So they worked out that issue and it was finally an executive agreement. There were a couple of small points and the Spanish Foreign Minister was unrelenting. He was like a little terrier that had Kissinger's leg and would not let go. Finally at one point Kissinger said, "You're a high roller." And we had to explain what a high roller was. Anyhow, they reached agreement, the executive agreement was signed in the Spanish embassy on a Saturday afternoon. And that Senate negotiations were taken care of. But Franco was alive, he was doddering. The year before his Foreign Minister, Blanco, had been blown up by a bomb. We sent the Vice President to the delegation, Porter went with him, I didn't go because I went out to the airport to meet my Mother and missed the plane. But anyhow, Porter came back saying, "He's ga-ga," referring to Franco. They had an audience with him and he said Franco just sat in his chair, and he drooled, and didn't say anything at all. I gather in fact Franco had periods, some periods he was quite lucid, other periods he was like that. But Franco was obviously past his prime. And then in the fall of 1976, I remember there was just a routine ticker saying the Spanish cabinet meeting had been canceled because Franco was indisposed. So I took it back to the Spanish desk officer, Matt Durkey, and said, "Keep your eye on this situation." And little did we know that in fact that was the final crisis. He lingered, and was made to linger I think quite indecorously, for days and days. They kept him alive. They were so frightened of what would happen, and what might happen, when he died that they prolonged his life by every possible means. It was unfortunate. There was operation after operation. Finally he died, and there was indeed great rejoicing in Spain. I had the impression then, and I think it's still correct even after living later in Spain, the rejoicing was not only relief, but it was an end to boredom because in fact a lot had been done during the last years of Franco's regime in ways except the psychological. It was still the old regime, it was still the stultifying psychological, and especially cultural atmosphere. Things were going smoothly, the country was prospering. The margins had been, of what was permissible, had been widened consistently over the years, but people were bored, and they knew that with the end of the Franco period, life would change and become more interesting. And to a large degree I think that was in fact the case. The reaction in the country was virtually zero. There was no reaction. In the succeeding years the Francos were gradually edged out of power, voted out.

Q: What were we thinking? Obviously having just gone through the trauma of the Portuguese thing, we must have been looking everywhere to see who were the wild men who might take over, weren't we?

BARBOUR: Oh, yes. But there was an element there that we pinned some hopes on, but they were very uncertain hopes, and that was the King. The King had been brought up as creature of Franco. He had been trained in a military academy.

Q: King Juan Carlos.

BARBOUR: King Juan Carlos, yes. He'd been brought up in a Francoist mold. Franco had made him his heir and successor, and apparently really had great affection for him, and probably even was reciprocated. But there was always a question as to what the real role of the King would be, and nobody knew. There were indications, and there were signals that the succession would be a respectable one. And as I said, the last years of the Franco period, things that would have brought about a jail sentencing, were tolerated, were permitted. Fewer people were going to jail for political crimes, and once in jail they were not being badly treated.

To leap ahead, when I was in Spain the then Minister of Justice, a socialist, led a parliamentary commission to visit some prisoners. To one of them he said, "Ah, this is where I was for..." whatever the period was, and he said, "it really wasn't so bad." But nonetheless, the changes away from the previously brutal years had created an atmosphere that was essentially nonviolent, it was tolerant. The socialists had lived in France in exile for most of the time, they were back in Spain. The parties were dormant, you might say, but they were working, they were building. Felipe Gonzalez had returned to Spain, this young pro-France(?) some years before. Wells Stapler had invited him to the embassy. So things had already begun to move. There was not the fear, there was uncertainty, but there was not the fear of what might happen in Spain, as there had been in the case of Portugal. There was a transition, a Francoist transition, the Prime Minister whose name I've forgotten, who, although a Francoist, took some steps in a less illiberal direction, but he didn't last very long. He was replaced by Suarez, [Adolfo?] his first name but starts with an A, I know, because we had a message saying, there will be a new Prime Minister, and his initials are A.S., so we quickly got out the list...a serving minister. Well, there were two, and one was Suarez, and the other was somebody else. Suarez, who had been a Francoist, a Minister of Youth and Sports in the Franco regime. The King made this choice, he was the new Prime Minister. Young, rather attractive, close to the King, and he began, you might say, either an active or a passive dismantling of the Franco regime and structure. And it was done from within. It was done by those concerned. The extremists were gradually edged out and the less extreme for a while were kept in. It was an amazing transition. There was fear of the bunker, which was the Francoist political-military-industrial-financial establishment. Lots of cartoons at that time showed the fortress, the bunker. And it was believed that when elections were held, as they were scheduled to be held very soon, the bunker would show that it controlled enormous force, influence and resources. All the forces and influences that were imputed to it. Everyone assumed the elections were held, and the bunker, the Francoist parties received a very small percentage of votes, maybe as much as 15%, I'm not...that may have been it. The communists, who of course were the other party, received also a very small percentage of the votes. So the transition regime continued in power, gradually changing, riding an economy that was doing well which of course helped, and settling in for a long haul. And maybe there we ought to stop because I better get my car before they get it.

Q: Okay. Let's put on tape here what I'd like to do the next time we get together, before we leave EUR, a bit about how you saw the transition between the Ford administration, and Kissinger, and the Carter-Vance administration regarding western Europe, and we'll pick it up from there.

Today is April 10th, 1995. Bob, you heard that last statement where we'll pick it up. You were what, the DAS for Western Southern Europe. You were there during the transition period.

BARBOUR: Transition from the Nixon-Kissinger period to the Carter-Vance period.

Q: In some places that can be rather stressful for the professionals around because you have new boys on the block, and they want to stretch their muscles, and do something different and make their mark, and always there's a sort of learning curve problem. Did you find that in your particular area, or not?

BARBOUR: It was not as dramatic, not as sensible, as I had expected it to be. There was a change, of course, in the Assistant Secretaries, a very gradual one. Arthur Hartman left and went to Paris. George Vest came in from being director of political-military affairs. So it was a change of names and faces, but not of substance, or really of style. Both were extremely impressive individuals, both of them. Over time however, I'm talking after three or four months...I should add, to go back a bit, dealings with the NSC were also easier than I had expected them to be. They were well-meaning, well intentioned, certainly competent people, so the transition in the early days was quite smooth. What we found out later on was, first of all at the NSC level, the people we dealt with, despite having the personal and the professional qualifications that I mentioned, showed themselves at times to be extremely, well, naive. It was reinventing the wheel sort of idea, and what were proposed to us as really innovations and ideas, frequently were things that we had long since tried, and had not worked. So, we were frequently in a position of deflecting what seemed to be new ideas from going very far because they were not new, and we knew they would not go very far. It was not an unpleasant situation, it was just somewhat frustrating.

Q: Often this requires more diplomacy than dealing with foreign countries.

BARBOUR: Personal relations were always good, they were always accessible on the telephone and we met with some regularity. But we were, as I said, frequently in that situation of turning aside brilliant innovations on the grounds they were not innovations, and that we too had thought them brilliant some months or years earlier.

The more difficult, more profound, differences were at the top. With Nixon and Kissinger, of course, you had the ultimate pragmatists, very perceptive, very sensitive to the American interests in any particular situation. And well versed, very comfortable in the concept of the use of force to achieve a particular purpose. I don't mean military force, I just mean the power of the United States in its general terms as an element in the accomplishment of foreign policy objectives. We went from that, in which areas were well defined, interests were primary, etc., to a situation in which interests were present but less vigorously pursued because of other complicating factors. And, of course, I realize a lot of people today would say, oh, yes, Chile and all that sort of thing, but we found that it was difficult to get clear cut decisions, and when we got them we would have a decision one day, and then maybe before long it would be changed, not in the White House at the staff level, but frequently by the President himself. The great example of that was the so-called neutron bomb.

Q: Yes, that was a major one, and you were dealing with that, weren't you?

BARBOUR: Yes, I remember it.

Q: Can you explain what the so-called neutron, the whole issue because I think it's very important.

BARBOUR: Well, of course, I do not recall the technical aspects. It was designed to be effective against armor, as I recall, by the penetrating power of these lethal neutrons. It was a new type of weapon whose explosive powers were dispersed in killing power, rather than destructive power. Right or wrong, the administration decided that we would pursue that new weapon because of its vast military potential. So it made a great, great effort to do so with the NATO.

Q: Did you get involved with all of this?

BARBOUR: Not directly because it was done mostly in NATO. Of course anything we did in a bilateral area, yes, with my countries I was involved in. We were unrelenting and unyielding in our pursuit of it, and, of course, at the same time the Russians, for exactly the same reasons, were putting out their best efforts to defeat it, demonstrations and everything they controlled in western Europe was out in the streets, or in the newspaper columns, developing all of the thousand of arguments why it was not a good thing to do. And you remember one of them was, it saves buildings but kills people.

Q: Yes, its a capitalistic weapon.

BARBOUR: Exactly.

Q: I might point out to put it in perspective. This weapon was particularly designed against large tank forces, armor, and the Soviet Union had a tremendous preponderance of armor. So from our point of view this made a hell of a lot of sense. I mean, if you're going to kill people, it's better to go after them rather than just trying to make rubble.

BARBOUR: NATO strategy assumed that any Soviet movement on land would involve massed armor formations and this is what it was designed against. Anyhow, we finally prevailed, even got the Germans-I guess it was Helmut Schmidt at that time-to agree, and we were going for the final endorsement in NATO. Then suddenly one Saturday morning George Vest got a telephone call from the White House saying the President had changed his mind, and therefore we would not pursue it. I remember sitting around in his office at that very moment talking about, not only our frustrations, but what kind of message were we sending to the Soviets. And that is, I guess, the most easily remembered example. It was certainly one of the most dramatic. It was not the only one because in general it was hard to get clear cut focused decisions in the way that we had been accustomed to getting them under the preceding administration. So, yes, there were elements in the transition that we had to wrestle with.

Q: Can we talk a little more about the neutron bomb. What were the reactions you were getting. Your bailiwick were which countries now?

BARBOUR: Western Europe. France, Italy, Spain, Portugal were the main ones, East Turkey and Cyprus, etc.

Q: The most publicized one is the fact that Helmut Schmidt had sort of laid himself way out on a limb, being from the socialist side, and going for this thing and Carter had cut him off, and he despised Carter thereafter. But in your countries, were you getting any reflection of this. I mean we had obviously been using pressure to get people to accept this, and then to have this.

BARBOUR: The French had never been enthusiastic. The biggest problems were the British and the Germans, both of whom felt betrayed, as you said. And it did have an effect on our future position in dealing with those governments in that administration because whatever the personal relations might have been, there was always an element of doubt, which is understandable as to just how persevering we would be once we made a decision, once we took a difficult position. How far will the Americans go with it if things really get tough. Then there was always that element of doubt in their minds. But that was apart from dealing with the transition administration to administration.

Q: What was the attitude of the Italians on this? Because they'd usually been kind of with us on some of the more difficult positions, even though they might not agree.

BARBOUR: The effect was devastating, even if the governments individually might have been relieved that suddenly the pressure was off in their own streets and things, they're in the same quandary. The position of the United States in NATO was enormously diminished by this single decision. It was not something that went away quickly and easily.

Q: You sat there with George Vest talking about this, at the time when you heard this decision was that a subject of discussion about not just the use or non-use of the neutron weapon, but about its affect on our alliance?

BARBOUR: Oh, indeed. George, of course, had been deeply involved in things regarding NATO, and the European communities for a long time, so he sensed it first and foremost. My particular interest was with the countries I was concerned with. I knew it would be secondary because I was not concerned with the British or the Germans. The French position sort of took it in stride, well, that's what one would expect. Giscard d'Estaing, I think, was the President and our relations were not all that brotherly. I forget who the Foreign Minister was at that particular time, but they sort of said, first of all, "Yes, we might have expected it," and then secondly, within Europe they said, "Well, you know, this is what you have to expect."

Q: We've been saying it all the time. I'm pushing this a little more because this was a very important decision. It's made at the top. Do you know, did George Vest, he was the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, knowing what the effect would be, did he go to Vance? Was that within your purview and say, "Look, let's reconsider this thing because this is..." I mean going to Vance to go to the President, it's not just the neutron bomb, it's all sorts of things that are going to come out of this. Or did we feel comfortable? Maybe nobody felt comfortable trying to do this.

BARBOUR: I don't recall a specific reaction on George's part other than general dismay because he saw the implications both on the western side and the eastern side. I think he was very disappointed in the role of the Secretary. But I don't want to put words in his mouth, I'm sure you're talking to George, and you should talk to him. But he was very unhappy for all the right reasons. My recollection is quite vague but I think he concluded that it would be pointless to go back to the Secretary because he assumed the Secretary was part of the President's decision.

Q: Well, one did have the feeling that this was a group that didn't understand the Soviet Union at that point. I mean, they thought they could treat it as a reasonable country.

BARBOUR: You have to go back to something I alluded to earlier. I think there was a feeling that they didn't understand the role of the United States in the world, our obligations, our position, our responsibility, our possibilities, all of those things. I don't want to be too unkind to them because certainly they were well qualified, and well intentioned, but there was this problem of, well, it was part of the brilliant new idea scheme of things that just exactly what was the position of the United States in the world when it came to pursuing our own national interests. Of course, at that time another general obstacle, as we saw it, suddenly was in the area of human rights. The situation of human rights within a particular country many times took on more importance than the interests of the United States in that country. Again, people say, ah, yes, Chile and the American coziness with dictators, etc., was a fact. It really was a fact, nobody had any illusions about a particular country, or what we should be striving toward, etc., it was just that there were times and that's when the Bureau of Human Relations was created.

Q: Bureau of Human Rights, with Pat Derian as Assistant Secretary.

BARBOUR: ...came into existence, and suddenly seemed to have an overriding veto on everything. Human rights have become an accepted foreign policy objective, thanks to the Carter administration, because he did impose that, and it is accepted throughout the world. That human rights situation in a country is a valid interest of other countries. But again, there was this confusion between the interests of the United States, and the interests of others, and which should we be pursuing.

Q: You stayed in the EUR area as Deputy Assistant until 1978. Were there any other issues. Did human rights intrude at all in your area. I wouldn't think they would.

BARBOUR: They did in the southern European area of Greece, Turkey, Cyprus. I recall the Cyprus crisis of the summer of 1974.

Q: July 15th, '74.

BARBOUR: The Turks invaded with what they thought, and history may agree with them, was a valid cause. It's an interesting example. I was not in the bureau at that time, I was still in Personnel, but I was called up to work on the Task Force the next day. It's an interesting example of a diplomatic failure on our part because it was the era of the Greek colonels in Athens. We didn't really like them, but we lived with them, and there was a feeling, I guess on the part of the Secretary, that you don't have to like people in order to get along with them because our bases were important, Greece was in NATO, and that important, the southeastern flank was significant, and all that sort of thing. Anyhow, we knew that the Greek colonels had interests in Cyprus. They still had the insurrection area infrastructure and all that sort of stuff. We sent them a message, do not do anything. But the message was, you might say garbled in transmission. The ambassador chose to have it delivered at a lower level.

Q: It was Henry Tasca.

BARBOUR: Yes...had it delivered at a lower level through non-official channels, and it was received by the Greek military as a fig leaf, the Americans are just stating this for the position. What it really means is they will understand if we go ahead, and go ahead they did. Anyhow, the result was that the island was partitioned, as it still is, mass movements of populations back and forth. It was still just a situation. Well, I think the spring of 1978, the Turks had been suffering for some time under a virtual arms embargo on our part. The Greek lobby was very active, very vociferous, and very successful.

Q: In the times it was considered as successful, almost even more so than the Israel lobby.

BARBOUR: It was much less subtle, and used a sledge hammer when necessary to considerable effect. The result was the Turks more or less made pariahs, had become pariahs to the administration. And they were suffering because of it, suffering economically, and suffering militarily because the military establishment was deteriorating. I forget exactly what the chronology was, but the military came back into power in Turkey. Suarez was forced to take over power again because Turkey gave every sign of falling apart. The government had ceased to function, there was turmoil in the streets. You had these extremist parties in the parliament blocking all forms of helpful legislation. The country was in very serious straits. And it was partly because of their situation vis-a-vis NATO, and vis-a-vis us. In any case, the Carter administration decided to take a serious look at the situation, and then consider changing its policies. So it brought in Clark Clifford as a special emissary for that purpose. He conducted his own review of it, and concluded that the policy on Turkey should be changed, and that we should cancel the embargo. He got his views accepted in the White House by the President. We went to Congress with new legislation, and there the administration did persevere against great opposition, against a lot of noise from the Greeks, a lot of hostility even from some people in Congress. They did persevere, and they did succeed, and that was, I think, a landmark legislation. And a good instance where they did recognize where American interests lay, and pursued them, and did so successfully, but not easily. It was a hard fight.

Q: What was the role when Clark Clifford was looking at this and even before he started looking at this. In the first place you have a Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, who had gone out there a couple of times. He had gotten his hands and feet dirty in the Cyprus situation before, so unlike Kissinger who really didn't understand it, I mean he didn't treat it as sort of a side show until it got too big for him. Vance knew it. You are the country director dealing with this area, what was your role before Clifford went. What were we saying? That we better watch Turkey because we've got real interests there, how did this translate?

BARBOUR: Well, most of this had developed before I had anything to do with it. We had a somewhat ambivalent policy towards Turkey, on a strictly bilateral level day-to-day relations. There was a good deal of understanding and sympathy. At the policy level the policy limitations were very much in effect. So the Turks tried very hard through sending people here to cause us to understand their situation. Individual attitudes were rather sympathetic, and how these translated up to the Secretary, I don't know. But the Counselor of the Department, Matt Nimetz, was one of Cyrus Vance's law partners. When he came in he gave him that particular brief, and Nimetz worked the brief. And he worked it with George Vest, and with the Office of Southern European Affairs-Nelson Lansky who was in charge. You've probably talked to Nelson, who has, I think, yet to divest himself 100% of that particular problem. Nelson is extremely competent, and energetic, and he had an extremely good staff with him, very fast, very proficient, well versed, they could turn out a good paper in a couple of hours which is quite a feat in the Department of State. So I decided it would be a mistake to inject myself from outside too much into that process. Not a very happy role, but I really thought, here you have a smooth running, well informed, articulate, and well run, organized operation, don't interfere with it. So I remained on the periphery. I met with Nimetz, I met with George, I met with Clark Clifford, but I did not carry the ball. George really carried the ball when it got into the final stages, including the legislative ball, and he did so very effectively. He put together the Congressional operation in which we all participated, but it was really Clifford dealing with the President on some of these issues alone, and dealing with the Secretary. Obviously dealing with the President when the Secretary is back. They reached these decisions that the policy should be reversed 180 degrees, and they did so.

Q: How about human rights in Turkey?

BARBOUR: Human rights in Cyprus was a bigger problem because it was a scab that the Greeks and the Greek Cypriots kept picking at all the time. And they marched, and they marched out all the atrocities the Turks were committing, and the threats they mounting against Greece, and all the provocations they were engaged in, etc. I remember one day the ambassador of Cyprus came in, I don't recall whether he'd seen George or Bessie Sohn, I think it was George. So he came in and he unburdened himself of his brief of grievances, they were, as frequently was the case, utterly outrageous. I walked him back to the elevator, and said to him, "You don't really believe all that stuff, do you?" And he said, "No, but I have to say it." It was that kind of atmosphere.

Q: As you were saying some of this, you were smiling, to get this into the record. In diplomatic practice, somebody comes in with a whole laundry list, particularly horror stories, when you realize you're between two rivals and you can get the same from the other side, it tends to scout out everything. In fact, although it maybe sounds like they're making strong protests on paper, in many ways at least at the professional level, they're undercutting their position because you begin to not treat anything they say seriously. I'm speaking as somebody who served four years in Athens.

BARBOUR: Ah, there you are, you know much more about it than I do.

Q: I left July 1st, 1974, but the point being that once you get into that action, would you say that this happens...

BARBOUR: You hear them out. Does it become a factor in the policy analysis and evaluation? In that case it did not, because the Clifford operation led to policy level conclusions that had always been present at the working level within the bureau. We always felt, not that the Turks were getting a raw deal, but that we were doing ourselves a great disservice vis-a-vis their strategic situation, vis-a-vis their situation in NATO, and vis-a-vis the Alliance itself. We were doing ourselves a great disservice by keeping them at arm's length on everything that mattered. So we were quite pleased that Clifford reached the same conclusion himself. Nimetz did not. Nimetz was always very critical on the subject of the Greeks and the Turks until Clifford came into the picture. And, of course, as the results of our new policy initiative became clear, the Greeks became even more strident, as I said, and so did the people who had similar views in Congress. That's the opposition I referred that had to be overcome in getting the legislation through. But we would listen to them. The Cyprus ambassador's refreshing attitude toward what he had to do to carry out his instructions, was of course already in our own minds, because some of the things they were complaining about were so outrageous. And then, of course, you had situations where we were doing things in Cyprus in the humanitarian area, economic area, and doing things. Also in Greece. We had a terrible time getting the Greeks to acknowledge that we were in fact being of any assistance to them whatsoever. They were not their best advocates and maybe your four years in Athens causes you to understand.

Q: Before you left in '78 were there any other major issues in your bailiwick? In Spain, Italy, France.

BARBOUR: Relations with France were always friendly but prickly. The French always had a way of developing their own ideas as to what events in Europe should be within the Alliance, and that sort of thing. It was a chronic day-to-day problem. We had some difficulties really within multilateral institutions. We could never count on support for doing things. Now there were times when they would come through bravely, brilliantly, and I think proved that when national interest coincided, they were the ultimate pragmatist. When their interest coincided with ours they could be counted on 100%, when they didn't then they made it clear that we were quite wrong.

In Italy the political situation bubbled and bubbled. The problem there was seen, I think, historically the wrong problem. The problem was, how to keep the communists, not just out of power, but away from power. We did not talk to anybody in the communist party at that time. The ambassadors were not only enjoined from doing so, but had no interest whatsoever in doing so. So one of the things we did do was to get...I remember specifically, getting a telegram, a short one going out, saying, "If you think it would serve the interest of the United States government to have contacts with the communist party, you are authorized to do so, and you are the judge of whether it would be." So there was that that moved along.

Fortunately, this was somewhat earlier, but we had the vestiges of the Portuguese revolution. This was 1975, by that time I was Director of Western Europe, we may have talked about it. We still had the vestiges of that. The Portuguese, after a period of internal turmoil but virtually no blood, pulled themselves together, brought in Mario Suarez, and the government first was left center, and then moved back to the center.

Spain, we had the transition. Franco died in 1976, I think, when I was in Western European Affairs. By 1978 the effects of the transition were becoming clearer. It was by no means given that it would succeed, but it had moved along. It was not the crisis that it had been at one time, but it was still a very interesting and important situation. The revolution from within, by means of which of using ex former Franco people, they threw out their old system, and brought in a new one. It was fascinating to watch.

In Malta we had Dom Mintoff. That was one of the countries that we had to work with. Dom Mintoff was a fantastic political phenomenon, utterly, utterly I think without scruples, very effective, and a real tyrant in many ways. Not at all above bending the laws, using a little elbow and muscle here and there if people were causing trouble. We had no serious problems with him because Malta didn't count all that much, but it was potentially troublesome.

Q: We were concerned about either the Soviets or Libya.

BARBOUR: The Libyans, in fact, were there. They had established a bilateral relationship that we didn't like at all. They had bought into a shipyard, as I recall. They had denied us port access, a port that we had used for years. The British had left.

Q: You say the Maltese would not let us have port access.

BARBOUR: The Navy had used Malta for decades, then under Mintoff that right had been withdrawn. The British had been pretty much expelled. The British Navy could go in, but not in the way that it could before, and I think could not use the dockyards. They had, as I recall, a large dry dock, a very large dry dock, it was suddenly no longer available to them or to us. The Libyans had signed some commercial contracts which I think gave them access to facilities in Libya for helicopter repair, and various other things that we didn't like at all. It was not a serious problem. Soviet commercial ships could go in, fishing vessels could go in, trawlers with all their antenna could go in. Mintoff, of course, was fully aware but he was obviously getting advantages from it, and I think he undoubtedly enjoyed being nasty to the rest of us. It was not a serious problem, but we never knew when it might become more serious than in fact it was. Largely it was Mintoff's personality, and he was a very interesting individual.

Those were the sort of things that we thought about.

Q: Our ambassador in Italy was Richard Gardner, and the communist party was always hovering around 30%. What was his proclivity vis-a-vis the communists as far as wanting to make contact with them that was left to his judgment. Did he make any movement towards doing that, or not?

BARBOUR: To my surprise, he did not pick up happily the authority that we thought we had gone a long way to give to him.

Q: It's interesting because he was an academic coming out of Columbia University, and one would have thought that if for no other reason than just wanting to show some movement or something, because the communists at that time were much more what we would call Euro-communists than tools of the Soviet Union. At least that's the way we were seeing it at the time.

BARBOUR: Well they called themselves Euro-communists. It was ironic because at the working level we had felt for years, even before the time I was there, that we were being suckered by all the parties of the establishment who, of course, were not only in touch with the communists, but though we did not know it, in bed with them. The communists were just as much of that establishment as anybody else. They played by the same rules and got the same benefits, proportional, of course. And we had always thought this is crazy, everybody is talking to them but us. But they, of course, being the Christian Democrats, would say, oh, no, no, if you start talking to the communists imagine what that will do to their position in Italy. The answer to that was that view was accepted, but they never got a lot of sympathy for it. That's one of the things the new administration did do. Was it turned to our advantage? No, it was not.

Q: You left Washington and went to Madrid where you served from '78 to '84, and you went as Deputy Chief of Mission. Can you tell me how you got the job, and who was the ambassador?

BARBOUR: I'd been in Washington about five years at that time. No embassies were opening up, none were expected to open up for about six months, and I thought I would like to go out. And moreover college tuitions were coming along, staring us in the face, and it was easier to save money abroad than it was in Washington. That was a significant factor. Arthur asked me to go to Paris with him, and I was quite keen to do that, we'd been in Paris before and it was a good job. But in order for that to happen, he wanted his DCM to get his own embassy, Sam Gammon, and I agreed completely that that indeed should be a precondition. So we waited, and nothing was happening for Sam, and nothing was happening anywhere else for the same reasons that I wasn't going to one. The Department passed a rule, a new policy, told me to my surprise it was strictly a Personnel thing, saying that three year assignment limits were to be imposed, and that meant that Sam Eaton in Madrid would have to be leaving. He had been there three years, more than three years. So Madrid was opening up, Paris was not. I had majored in Spanish literature in college, had always wanted to go to Spain. I had always been fascinated by that country, and there was an opportunity. Wells Stapler was the ambassador, I had known Wells a long time since we had been in Paris together. Had been together in Paris, in Rome and in the Department. So he said, "Sure, okay, if you want to come here, if you think you could learn to speak Spanish." And that's really how it eventuated. I went to Madrid very happily, excitedly. In the meantime, of course, Wells left at his own volition. Wells wanted to leave and did. He did not want another embassy which he could have had.

And Terry Todman went. I did not know Terry Todman. I had never even met him so far as I know. So I said, well so much for that. I'll just wait for Paris to open. So I went to see him as Assistant Secretary, and said to him in so many words, "Look, I know that you've been in this business a long time, you have lots of people you're comfortable with you want for your DCM, so in effect count me out. I'm happy where I am and I'll just wait until Paris opens up, and go to EUR. He asked whether I'd be willing to go if I was offered, "Oh sure, but I fully realize that you want your own person." We had a nice chat, and he took the occasion to ask about Spain. And I went back to work, settled back in EUR, and then four weeks later he called and said, "Why don't we leave things the way they were." And I went off with him and had the kind of experience in which I said to myself over and over and over again, "If I'm ever an ambassador, I hope I treat my DCM the way he treats his." We had a warm personal professional relationship, intimate. Our families, our wives, our children, a kind of a relationship that in my inspector years I look for even now. The DCMs and ambassadors to go in at any time, put your feet up, exchange funny stories, and exchange gossip, talk about this, and talk about that, without being asked to write something he just said off the top of his head, oh I just saw so and so, he would not think it worthwhile to dictate and make a note to use later on. It was a very happy relationship. That's why I stayed six years, as did he almost.

Q: Because Todman was a major figure in the Foreign Service, a very professional ambassador. How did he work within Spain? What was his method of operation?

BARBOUR: It's remarkable, as a black American he was not enthusiastically received by Spanish media, etc., before he went. There was still a lot of very right wing sentiment in Spain, and Spain is one of the most homogeneous countries in Europe, linguistically, culturally, ethnically, despite the various dialects without a doubt it is a Catholic Hispanic society, almost like Japan in its homogeneity. So there was that thing. He had never served in Europe. He had spent his career in Africa, and South Asia, and Latin America, etc. So he went there as a kind of outsider to Europe, but he also went there with enormous professional and personal gifts. He spoke Spanish, very good Spanish very easily, naturally. Great personal charm, extremely articulate, and very sociable. So over a period of time, it was not very long, he had established himself. And, of course, he went for the political jugular, he knew where it was and knew where to go after it, and how to go after it, and he did so. He knew everybody in the establishment.

Q: Where was the political jugular?

BARBOUR: It was in the political aorta, was the new system. It was still struggling, it was still in the shadow of what they called the bunker, the political-military establishment. They took the oath, they dealt with the old Francoists, the military industrialists, the bankers, the big businessmen, and a very noisy political party, noisy and nasty at times. But their assets, and their viability, and the mass rallies they continued to organize with the blue shirts and the upraised arms, and that sort of thing, still frightened a lot of people and caused them to believe that this group had a lot more power than in fact the first election showed that it did.

Todman concluded that they were finished, and not worth wasting time on. He also concluded, and this was almost less easy, that the old society should not be alienated, but also not worth spending any time or money on. That the area in which to work, to devote his efforts, was in this new developing sector, which was the democratic sector. Of course, our objective was to promote democracy in Spain farther down the road and bringing them into NATO. Our purposes in Spain were very clear, and he staked them out and we all went after them, and ultimately achieved them. We didn't do it, but we helped them along.

Q: The Spanish, as always, in any country they do it for their own reasons, but the point is you try to ease the way, to provide rationale.

BARBOUR: Everything we did operationally was aimed to furthering that first objective, helping democracy establish itself in Spain by bolstering certain institutions, certain individuals that we came across starting with the King. And working for a more democratic military establishment, and then NATO down the road. And so we did, by operations, we had lots of visitors, we brought in military visitors from NATO, Todman always organized a little intimate gathering, they would speak, and this went on month after month. He was out seeing them, talking to them. He was untiring, bursting with energy. And I don't want to underestimate him, with a lot of charm and linguistic facility. He was perfectly comfortable talking with the King, as well as was Wells for that matter. But by the time we got there new people were coming on the scene.

I remember one of the first things we did, one of the first luncheons he organized after I got there which was about a week after he did, was a group of labor leaders. The labor leaders had been beyond the pale for a long time, they were among the untouchables. So he brought in these socialists, these wild bearded people who didn't wear neckties. You know bearded people who don't wear neckties are not to be trusted. So we had a luncheon for them, and I think it was the first time that that particular group had ever been inside the residence. And what did we do? Nothing, just had a nice lunch, chatted, showed ourselves to be interested, friendly, potentially useful to them, etc. Well, the Labor Attaché, John Glen, had been in touch with these people, and had been working with them for a long time. They all knew him, they didn't know anybody else. So this opened up a new front. Wells to his great credit was the first one to bring in socialist leaders. That was a great breakthrough in itself. So the process had started. What Todman did was to build on it, take advantage of every new opening that came along. So when we got there we were not barnstormers, or anything like that. We were just pushing on doors that were gradually that either had been opened by Wells Stabler, or were opening themselves and we were just pushing and helping, trying to show that the United States is not hostile. Your own press will tell you the United States is really sympathetic to the right, we are here to help you install democracy, and that's what we spent five years that I was there, and he was there doing it.

Q: Knowing dynamics of places, I am sure that your aristocracy, probably the old establishment, loves to have ambassadors, diplomats, adorn their tables, and that's what they live on. But I would think there would be quite a bit of resentment, and dog in the manger business because they weren't getting the attention they used to get. Did you find that?

BARBOUR: Yes, but I didn't. I don't know whether it ever really manifested itself, but as I think I said, Todman decided he didn't want to alienate them, he just didn't want to waste any time on them. If someone invited him to something, he would go if it was worthwhile, if it was not, they were a little bit below on the horizon as far as the working staffs were concerned. We didn't waste any time on them.

Q: What were the dynamics of "into NATO, not into NATO," while you were there?

BARBOUR: At that time they were in court(?), that was down the road. That was someday, but certainly not something we wanted to wave at that time and frighten them, which would have been the effect. It was down the road. It became much more visible in the last couple of years that we were there, just as it became visible to the Soviets objective. The Soviet ambassador had his objective to keeping them out. He failed. But no, there were no dynamics at that time. We had a very good military relationship with the Spanish, and a very good military to military relationship. We had all kinds of joint institutions, political-military affairs, etc. We didn't want to give the impression that we were resistant to change in any of those areas of our relationships. It would have been a great mistake to try to do so anyway because it was the kind of change that could not be resisted. So our purpose was to show that in fact we knew there were changes, the changes were for the better, we endorsed them, we embraced them, and would facilitate them to the extent we could.

Q: Were there any forces within the United States...in the old days back sometime, you had the Catholic church which was pro-Franco, and they were the sort of people who were more comfortable with Franco. Did you find any of this going on within the American political system that you had to pay attention to?

BARBOUR: No. The Spanish churches, at that time, were still also very conservative, very conservative some elements of it. And you had a very influential and prosperous Opus Dei organization to this day.

Q: Which is almost...you better describe what Opus Dei is.

BARBOUR: Opus Dei at that time was an exclusively male organization made up of people who along the lines of some of the old Orders of Chivalry. It took certain vows to dedicate themselves to working for the church, vows of celibacy, not poverty since most of them in Spain are very wealthy. Celibacy, dedication, obedience, etc. Celibacy not in the old fashioned sense as many of them were also married, but to dedicate themselves or working for the benefit of the church. Genuinely ardent in their faith. They have an excellent university, probably one of the very best in Spain in Navarra, and they work with young people to bring them into the lay family of the church. They do so very successfully. Anyhow, they were very present there, and a lot of people who dealt with them in fact, bankers, leading businessmen, were and still are members of Opus Dei, but not anti-democratic. Maybe they too sensed what was coming and thought it would be unwise to oppose it. That was one of the institutions present.

The bunker more or less faded away. The first elections showed that they had very little support, it was all noise, and there was a very quick reassessment in the Spanish psyche about the extent of this threat, and it was promptly redimensioned. There was an outburst you may recall in 1980 when they had this wild gun-slinging lieutenant colonel, Tejero, who tried to overthrow the government in a comic opera episode in which no one was hurt but he had the entire government and parliament bottled up inside the Cortes for about 12 hours, and he was in command, but he didn't have the King. He thought he had the captains generals with him, but he didn't because once the King put on his uniform at 1:00 in the morning and addressed the nation and said to them, "Lay down your arms, this is ridiculous. I command you." They did. The captains generals sat on their hands, and Colonel Tejero at dawn, I guess, was hungry for breakfast and that was the end of it. He had his three or four people.

Q: When this happened it was on television, and he was up on the dais making pronouncements.

BARBOUR: No, no. I was sitting at my desk listening to the radio, there's a new government, it was a vote of confidence. Adolfo Suarez's government, a confidence vote. And we were curious to see how it would come out, so I was sitting there listening to it in my office, and as they called the names there was shouting-I forget what the word was they were shouting. And then there was shooting. They shot into the ceiling, repairs for which they later had to pay. And in came this Lt. Colonel Tejero waving his pistol. By that time, when the shooting took place, I reached into my drawer and pulled out my little pocket dictating machine and set it by the radio. It was being televised but I don't think it was live, but the cameras kept going. So, he came in and these Guardia Nacional, who in the best traditions that the Guardia Nacional, thought they were carrying out legitimate orders, trained their submachine guns on the assembled audience, which was quite distinguished. And Tejero said, "Everybody on the floor." And down they went behind their desks, and before long he said, "Shut off those cameras." So they had to stop and shut down the radio. So in keeping with Spanish hours that must have been 8:00 at night by then, 7:30 - 8:00. So we called the Operations Center, opened the line and kept it open for the next 15 hours, and watched the scene evolve. Al Haig was Secretary of State. At that position all we were trying to do was describe what was happening, and figure out just exactly what it implied, and how far it was going to spread because Spain is divided into military regions, and at that time each region had a captain general in charge of the military establishment within that region. And we did not know which ones, and indeed one or two were waffling. The one in Valencia, in fact, did more than waffle, he did things for which he was later punished. But in any case we monitored the situation which was, say if it was 7:00 in Madrid, was 1:00 in the morning in Washington. The President had gone to bed, there really was not much the Washington establishment could do although at that point in the early hours, we were, as I say, trying to see exactly what was happening, what was going to happen. So we did not do what the Europeans were able to do since it was also 7:00 or 8:00 in western Europe, and that is have their chiefs of state get on the telephone. When we raised that possibility we were told the President was asleep, and Al Haig said, "Well, it's an internal affair at this point it's strictly a Spanish internal affair," which enraged the Spaniards. But having just been criticized for having said so much about other situations in other countries that had proved to be inopportune, he was just not saying anything.

Early the next morning when the President was up, we got him on the telephone with the King, but by that time it was all over, and the Spaniards saw we were watching to see which way it was going to go. We weren't at all. We told the Department about 11:00, I guess, the situation had been contained, and that was before the King went on television. The ambassador had no instructions, of course, and wasn't likely to get any at that hour from Washington so there anything that he could do. In retrospect, of course, he should have acted on his own. He would have taken a great risk, it would have paid off, but ambassadors are taught to be disciplined.

Q: Let's say this thing happened around 7:00-8:00, you said by 11:00 you thought it had been contained. You're sitting there in the embassy, how do you find out?

BARBOUR: Well, we had people out on the streets to see if anything else was moving. We had the consular agents around, one of whom was in Valencia. Of course, the Spanish media had gone wild and was full of radio and TV coverage in situations throughout the country. They were determined, given their own inclinations, to demonstrate that this thing wasn't going anywhere, at least they hoped it wouldn't. The final determinant was of course the King. I was able to talk to a friend who was the deputy commandant of the Guardia, but all he was able to do was to confirm that they were real Guardia units. Our first reaction was that these were the Basque terrorists who had gotten a hold of some Guardia uniforms, and were staging this massive spectacular event in Madrid to get the people out of jail that they wanted out of jail. That took up about the first half hour until I was able to get the confirmation from Guardia Nacional itself. So, what are the dimensions of this thing? Well, the dimensions at first were horrendous, as I said. The entire government, because in that system you know, they're all parliamentarians and we had a vote of confidence, every cabinet minister is there, and every parliamentarian. It's a question of assessment, and you were guided as you well know, by your own data base, as we say now, by the people you can get on the telephone, what you get from your immediate coverage and what is available. You feed it in with your conclusions.

Q: When things are really like that, you want quick stuff, how about your military attaché's?

BARBOUR: Yes, they were out on the streets. We were very bold at that time because this was 1980 more or less, we gave them all little radios. That was 14 years ago, portable radios, little walkie-talkies. We had them out on the streets and I was scared to death, I said, "Keep these things in your pockets unless you absolutely have to use them. Call in by telephone, use a pay phone. Don't let them see Americans lurking in the background saying unintelligible things on portable radios." But we did have people on the streets, around the parliament and out where they should have been. We got a lot of information which confirmed our impressions.

Q: Were you able to get from our military people whether there were troop movements. Because this is usually the key. If all of a sudden the tanks or armored cars start rolling out of the barracks...

BARBOUR: ...as they did, about midnight we looked out of our windows and saw this long line of armored cars proceeding down the boulevard. And the question was, which way are their guns pointed? They were not factors. And what we learned from one of the assistant army attaché's who was down there was that they drove up with no orders, not clear what they were supposed to do, and turned around and went back to their barracks. Another sign that this thing wasn't really going to go anyplace, dramatic though it was.

Some months later the Madrid newspaper, reconstructed the plot and the event in a long series of articles. It was very good journalism but about three-quarters reliable, which is very good, although it's better today, I think, than it was then. Which showed that it really brought out the comic opera overtones of this thing. There really were only about three plotters, that's the reason nobody knew about it. And they had hoped to bring in some of the captains generals with whom they were in touch, and some of whom like the one in Valencia, who were sympathetic. But one of them showed up for a meeting of the conspirators, and saw that he was in the wrong uniform, so he turned around and left. Another one, they were to meet at a place by car, and the co-conspirator to be got lost. There were a number of things like that, so it never went anywhere. Well, it went to this dramatic culmination and Tejero is still in jail.

Q: How did we view, before and after, King Juan Carlos, when you first arrived there. What was the impression of Juan Carlos?

BARBOUR: Well, let's go back to the time of Franco's death, which was in 1976, maybe September. He was a very uncertain figure. He was, after all, Franco's adopted son, and I don't know whether that's legal or not. Franco referred to him as his son, treated him as a son, treated him as his heir to be, but never institutionalized it. Sent him to all the military colleges, saw that he was properly married, really was as much if not more of a father than the King's real father, the Count of Barcelona. So when Franco died the question was, will this pleasant, extremely agreeable, likeable, young man succeed? If so, to what degree? And in accordance with what were believed to be Franco's intentions, the successor government tried to make the King a figurehead. And Franco at one point had said something like, "Yes, my heir will be tied hand and foot." So the new government acted as though the King was to be the figurehead. He was King, he was never crowned, there was never a coronation.

Q: Took the oath before the Cortes.

BARBOUR: He did, he took the Cortes, there was a high solemn mass, but there was no coronation. He's never had a coronation. He was invested as King. So there was a lot of doubt, but he had an adviser, another quasi-father figure, a diplomat who died some years ago, much older than he was. And one surmises, though I cannot document it, that he also had among his immediate team people who have never spoken out, not even the adviser that I just referred to, whose name I can't remember, ambassador somebody or other, never wrote any memoirs, never talked about his role. So the extremely astute, and perceptive people who had a very clear objective that institutionalizing the King in the role that would lead Spain back to democracy. And either they coopted, or found an adult post for him, who was the Minister of Youth Affairs. The political instrument that would help him do the job. So the two came together, this is while I was still in Washington, so it must have been 1977, I guess. And Henry Kissinger had had ties to the King, and had his own interest and sympathetic, but unclear, picture of the King's future role. Vernon Walters knew the King better than anybody, and I think he succeeded in persuading him and people around Washington that he should not be written off. His relationship goes back some time.

Anyhow, after that less than clear start, we had reached a number of quasi-conclusions. First of all, we did want Spain to return to democracy. As I say, that was the number one objective of American policy, and very clear from the very beginning. And then secondly, I guess our expectations rose as little by little the King, and Adolfo Suarez after he became Prime Minister, began to dismantle a lot of the old team, and put in new people, and that's how the process began. Sam Eaton, who was DCM before me, has written a book about the first couple of years of the transition.

Q: Having this background, when this attempted coup took place, were you all asking at the embassy, where's the King, what's the King going to do? Or was there any doubt of the role of the King?

BARBOUR: That was the key question, what will the King do? None of us believed that the King would go over to these gun-slingers. But whether he would be equivocal, whether he would think that his position might be more secure with them, that was the question. We would have bet that he would come out against them, but until he made his own move, and even to this day how much soul searching within the palace there may have been, is not known because nobody has come out. But, again, this same group of intimate counselors must have rallied around him and bucked him up, and said, "This is the way to go," which I'm sure was in keeping with his own inclinations. But when it was announced that he would appear on television, and he appeared in his uniform, there was no question, and he said, "As your King, I command you." And that was it. We knew that he did command the armed forces, their loyalty was to the King, and they were very, very proud of him.

Q: You're saying around the King, did you see the King's influence expand after this?

BARBOUR: The King and Suarez developed a quite cordial relationship. They met regularly. They worked well together and I guess they saw eye to eye, or if they didn't, the King was persuasive. But there was a reinstitutionalization of the regime, a new constitution, for example, new electoral laws, free and open elections. All those things step by step took place and demarcated a very clear path.

Q: Did we have any contact with this group around the King?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: Was it pretty well clear at this point, because at this point we've moved from the Carter administration to the Reagan administration, and by many it was seen, both in the United States and certainly abroad, that all of a sudden you had a turn to the right in foreign affairs, as well as in other things.

BARBOUR: Well, as you know from your own experience, in foreign affairs you don't get sharp turns ever, usually basic interests remain basic interests. The question is whether you perceive them, and go after them to the same degree, or a lesser degree, and we've talked about some of those things. But there was never any deviation whatsoever from Nixon and Kissinger through Carter to Reagan where we wanted Spain to go, and that was toward the fruition of democratic process. It never ever changed.

Q: Did Haig make any noises about, having been a former commander of NATO, did he make any noises about...

BARBOUR: We had to be careful. There were references to Spain's joining NATO, never on the part of American officials, and we usually gulped and...they were said purposely because I suppose from time to time if we thought it important to let it be known that we thought Spain's interests would lie in NATO. We had a joint military planning commission headed by a major general on our part, that had as its purpose to...it was part of one of the base treaties, had as its purpose to modernize Spanish military thinking. And in that forum we were very, very NATO oriented. And they came to be themselves because obviously NATO is the place to be if you want to be a free western European democracy. So these Spanish military saw it, and so we encouraged through this mechanism to see it.

Q: Do we use the French model, I mean France is technically not in NATO, but involved in a lot of the planning.

BARBOUR: Well, France is not in the unified command. But they do participate at the political level. No, indeed not, they thought the Spanish military forces should be completely integrated. In the end they choose for something in between the French model and the foreign integrated one, but they have since moved, I think, in the direction more or less of complete integration.

Q: How about Suarez? Here is someone coming out of the socialist side.

BARBOUR: No, he was Minister of Youth under Franco.

Q: How did we see him?

BARBOUR: We saw him hopefully because we were told to see him hopefully. We did not know him. Indeed, we received a well informed tip that the new cabinet would be announced that evening in Madrid, and it would be headed by a present minister whose initials were A.S. So we got out the list and there were two people with A.S., and we picked the wrong one. So that's how well we knew him, and what was coming. But when we looked him up, as I said, we knew very little about him, he was very young, Minister of Youth, that sort of thing. We were also told, however he will work with the King, and indeed he did.

Q: Did Spain get at all involved in the great toing and froing that went on during this period about the Soviets had put an advance missile system an SS-20 or something like that, and then we were countering...

BARBOUR: That was much later.

Q: Was it an issue while you were there?

BARBOUR: Not really because Spain was out of reach. Indeed, it makes a lot of difference.

Q: A hell of a lot of difference, so the issue was one where we were putting a counter missile almost as a bargaining chip to get these things out of the area.

BARBOUR: Yes. That entire issue had a much lower noise level in Spain than it did in Germany and France, and those countries.

Q: How about bases?

BARBOUR: Bases were always an important issue. We had the major base at Terciera for the Air Force, and a major base at Roca for the Navy, and then we had some ancillary facilities around the country. They were governed base agreements, not treaties because we did not want them to be treaties. We did not want to have to submit them for approval by the Senate. We were afraid they might not get passed, so they were agreements. The presence of Terciera was a periodic issue and it even became one during this missile crisis period, you mentioned, when the Spanish media newspapers began to ask, "Is Terciera a threat to Madrid?" and things like that. Well, we told them Terciera could not be reached. One day I remember sitting in my garden at lunch with a socialist senator talking about such things, and I said, "I have to tell you in all honesty that Terciera is not worth a nuclear missile." He later became Foreign Minister, but that was the case, we didn't think Terciera was worth a strategic missile. Even if they could reach it, which they couldn't. But Terciera for the Air Force and Roca. We had other rights, but they were not of great interest to us.

Q: The Portuguese were always using the Azores as a great bargaining chip, but it seems like there is an endless negotiation going on with the Portuguese in which they're trying to get everything they can out of this. I mean they are people who for the last 30 years, or 40 years maybe, have been involved in nothing but these negotiations.

BARBOUR: I was involved in the Portuguese negotiations when Frank Carlucci was ambassador. The Portuguese negotiating position was always something like, stated or unstated, it was always something like, go away, we'll renew the agreement, don't worry about that. The question is, what we'll get in exchange for it. And we'd get up to the point where we'd say, "Look, this thing is going to expire, time is running out." "Well, we understand but what are you prepared to give for it?" The Spanish position, certainly in the round that I was involved in, and much more so later on, was, "Well, we'll see whether you are permitted to stay here." Our working assumption was that we would but it was a new team, and they were tough negotiators. And one big thing that was going for us was, that by that time the government had stated publicly that it would take Spain into NATO, and these bases would be great assets.

Q: This was about when?

BARBOUR: This was 1984, I guess we signed the last agreement. Todman was still there, so we negotiated for almost a year. These would be great assets to Spain vis-a-vis NATO, and we worked out an agreement. There were some new conditions, some new terms. We got to stay in Terciera, which had been a question, and when it was over Todman and I both told the Department that you'll never get another agreement this good, and you better start thinking about giving up Terciera because it's doubtful we'll get to stay there, and we'll be there five years from now. It was very clear in Spanish attitudes, even with the Spanish military. And when we started putting F-16s...

Q: Which were fighter planes.

BARBOUR: Yes, single engine. We started putting these F-16s into Terciera, and the Spaniards...let me go back a little. For many years we had had at Terciera a wing of Phantom, F-4s, and the Spaniards had had a wing of Phantoms, F-4s. We had the same aircraft so we had lots of cooperative logistical arrangements. "Got a tire you could lend us." "Sure." It made life much easier, this compatibility of equipment. We announced we were putting F-16s into Spain at a time when the Spaniards were themselves considering what successor aircraft they should buy. And after a lot of scouting around, they had narrowed the field down to the F-16, and the F-18, a twin engine longer range aircraft. When they decided to take the F-18 it was clear that this cohabitation was in jeopardy. They had made their own decision, and they would no longer get the benefits of this logistical situation which had been very beneficial, and they didn't want it. They didn't feel the need for it. It was a very clear sign that they meant business, when they kept saying, "You stay in Spain, but we want you away from Madrid." And indeed, we felt lucky that we were able to get five more years at Terciera. But we said, "You won't get them again." And indeed, after a lot of unpleasant negotiation, we didn't.

Q: Were you there when there was this air strike against Libya?

BARBOUR: No.

Q: You missed that.

BARBOUR: But we couldn't overfly Spain.

Q: How did you find the embassy, including we had a Consul General in Barcelona, what was your impression of the staff?

BARBOUR: We had a Consulate General in Barcelona, we had a Consulate General in Seville, we had consular agencies in Valencia, the Canary Islands, and Certhia. There were about 275 Americans under the ambassador, many of whom were military, and about an equal number of Spanish employees. It was a large mission, not as large as many of them have since become. I think when we were there, we were at least focused.

Q: You really had a goal, you wanted to see this nascent democracy really establish itself.

BARBOUR: We had very clear foreign policy objectives, very clear. And every time we had a CODEL, a congressional delegation, every time we had a visitor, we were very willing and able to point out and say our foreign policy objectives in Spain are institutionalization of democracy and membership in NATO. But, as I said, those were not new, and they were not inspired by us, they were givens.

Q: The next time we'll finish this up, and you're going to Suriname, and being a Diplomat in Residence and an inspector.

Today is July 24th, 1995. Bob, we're at the point where I mentioned before. We've got Suriname, then Diplomat in Residence, and you were in Suriname from '84 to '87, then you were Diplomat in Residence, and then you were an inspector. I can't remember if we covered it before, but tell me how that appointment came up.

BARBOUR: The appointment came up, I guess, in the usual fashion, my experience up to that point was all western European, and bilateral, but the European Bureau, as you know, is not in a position to have much influence on who goes to its posts. And that's how I happened to go to Suriname.

Q: Just for the record, why does the European Bureau not have too much control over...

BARBOUR: Because it is that bureau in the Department that has the fewest professional ambassadors, always. And sometimes very few indeed. In any case, I wound up going to Suriname which ironically is probably, after French Guinea, the most European part of South America. It's the smallest country in South America, and we had there a small embassy. I might mention that during the confirmation process, which was delayed at the instance of the senior Senator from North Carolina...

Q: Jesse Helms.

BARBOUR: Yes. One of the alleged objections, which he was said to have, and these were all spurious, was that it was not known whether I spoke Spanish. And I said, "Tell the good Senator that I do, but they don't." It was not at all an unpleasant assignment, it was not all uninteresting. The country is extremely diverse in its ethnicity, in its origins, in its history, the people are charming, are lovely and the kind of people who could teach all things such as manners and inter-racial relations. We had a very pleasant three years there, demanding, stressful, they were not agreeable, interesting, entertaining they were, we don't regret the three years there at all.

Q: You were there from '84 to '87. Before you went out to Suriname, there had been some concern about Suriname. There had been a coup, and it came about the time when we were getting concerned about Cuban expansion and all that. When you went out there in '84, what did you see as American interests in the area, and American concerns?

BARBOUR: By 1984 the Surinamese situation had settled down. It had gone through a rather blissful period thanks to the Dutch who saw in Suriname, I guess, beginning in 1950s and then in the '60s, an example they did not want to repeat after their fiasco in Indonesia. Consequently they had spent a lot of money building up Suriname at a time when the major industry, aluminum, was also rising, indeed doing very well on the world market. So that by the mid-1970s Suriname was a very well endowed, very prosperous little country. Well endowed in terms of social infrastructure, well endowed in terms of physical infrastructure. They had a very good civil service, it had a professional police force, it had an educational system, public health system, a telecommunication system, good roads for that part of the world. It was a model, to such an extent that the Dutch about 1975 said to Suriname, "All right, now you can be independent." And the Surinamese responded, "Not on your life, we like things just the way they are." So in the end the Dutch bought the Surinamese independence by another billion and a half dollars in forgiven loans, and development grants. Unfortunately, as I recall in 1976, independence was in 1976, it was voted by a small majority of the legislative assembly, very small, I think one vote if I'm not mistaken. Some years later after a period of not too successful self administration, the very small army, all Dutch trained of course, the army non-commissioned officers had developed a number of grievances, bread and butter grievances of various kinds, and they decided that they would stage what was later called coup d'etat, but was probably intended to be more in the nature of an armed demonstration. Anyhow, they shook the tree and lo and behold to their astonishment all the fruit came down and fell into their laps, and the country was theirs. They, having been trained in the Netherlands during a period of Dutch radicalism in the universities, and Dutch societies, professed to have very radical ideas themselves, and decided they were all left-wing. They weren't sure, but events showed the accuracy of their doubts just exactly what that meant. But they professed all kinds of left-wing slogans, etc.

Then in 1982, I forget the exact year, the Bishop in Granada, counted among his few friends in the western hemisphere, the Commandant de facto, autocrat, can't really call him a dictator, autocrat of Suriname, and they made a lot of their friendship. Then you had the trend in Granada we all know about that led to a situation there, that led to our intervention, and that left only Suriname, as you just said, among the states in that part of the world with radical left-wing official views.

And, of course, along with Bishop, came Castro. That never amounted to anything at all, except in print, and I think there was one visit to Havana during which, of course, the Cubans made a lot of their visitor. But nothing really came of it. Even so, the junta in Suriname was left in charge of the country in the aftermath of Granada, very uncertain of itself, very worried, and then they did a very terrible and stupid thing, they rounded up the corps of the intelligentsia, and murdered them. This I think was 1982, murdered them all which erased all the possibility of the military leaders ever being accepted again in polite western society. The Dutch suspended all of their aid, and we did the same with our minuscule program. And they were left to wallow in this slough of utter darkness that they had created for themselves.

There had been some internal security concerns there for the safety of the American community, that my predecessor, Bob Duemling, had dealt with very effectively. There had been some minor turbulence within the military which resulted in one of them being found hanged in his cell. So it was not by any means a bright spot on the Caribbean horizon. So I went there in 1984 into that kind of situation. What were our interests at that time? Not many. They were strategic you might say to try to do what was possible to eliminate that stain on the Caribbean ascription. They were commercial, to do what we could to help Alcoa, which ran Alcoa, the Surinamese aluminum company. And to give democratic elements every possible helping hand. So that's when I went.

Our introduction to Suriname was significant in that...there's only one airline connection between the United States and Suriname, and that is Suriname Airlines, SLM. So when we were going there, we arranged to take our dog whom we turned over to the airlines here, had him transferred him to Suriname Airlines in Miami, and we stopped off for a couple of days in Haiti, just for a kind of orientation. While we were there we received a cable from SLM saying, "Fear not, your dog will be on board, and so will Mr. Van who will look after him and meet you on your airplane's arrival in Port-au-Prince. This, I must say, is rather typical of Surinamese way of doing things. I started off by saying that they're wonderful people, and indeed they are.

The President paid an unofficial personal visit to New York during that summer, and my wife and I went up and took him and his family out to lunch, very informal, very personal. Our daughter came along and we had a very convivial, jovial, happy time. It was also part of our introduction to Suriname.

Q: Let me ask a question. Here is this government which had in the recent past slaughtered the elite of the country and you're taking one of the men who was responsible for that?

BARBOUR: Here we had, on the one hand, this terrible image of a government which had slaughtered the intelligentsia. In fact, it was a kind of para-government. By that time the military had allowed into prominence again a civilian government. A President, a Prime Minister, a cabinet, all civilians, and all officially unconnected with the military. So we chose to deal with the government. But I did go there, and this period when Suriname had its dark aura about it, and I give you these two introductory notes because they were quite different from the image that Suriname enjoyed in Washington. So we assumed the image was correct, and these pleasant realities were aberrations.

Shortly after we arrived we were invited to the installation of the new trade union leadership which was to have been held at the presidential palace. And I thought I would go to that. I was certain these were all the left-wing voices we had heard so much about, that it would be nice to see what these radicals really looked like. So I went. As we stood on the broad white veranda of the president's official residence looking out over the grass and the park, the labor leaders arrived and took their places on the other side, and I noticed one of them was wearing, not a T-shirt, a sweat shirt which said, "America," on the front. And then as we waited the band struck up Amazing Grace, and in came the president with the appropriate ministers, and they had their ceremony, and after that there was a reception, and I had a chance to speak to some of these labor leaders, and found them extremely congenial.

Q: Were we in consultation with the Dutch, because this had been their bailiwick for so long?

BARBOUR: The Dutch had an ambassador there, a very active, a very impressive ambassador, the French were there, Indians, Chinese, Russians, various others. The Dutch were looking after their vestigial interests, maintaining a presence, maintaining a flag and with it hope that better days would come back. They were like the French in much of French Africa, very present, very much a factor, but very low key and not actively or directly involved in many things, and do things that they did participate in officially, for example. Anyhow, I give you these elements of introduction because our whole stay in Suriname was marked by this congeniality, this enormous good humored dignity that the Surinamese have, that made our stay there very pleasant. I mean, I had contact whenever I desired with anybody there. I obviously visited them from time to time, I visited the military commander, who like everybody else there, was unfailingly courteous.

Q: But he was the de facto leader for so long.

BARBOUR: He was the power behind the throne, and undoubtedly responsible for the murder that I frequently as we talked, had in the back of my mind, is it possible that this person can have such bloody hands. In our very first meeting he asked whether American policies, and Dutch policies, were the same. And I said, "No, they're not the same, but," I said, "and I know you don't like to hear this, we do come together on the question of civil rights in this country." So we talked about human rights. And he listened very courteously, and then he said, "You're quite right, I don't like to have that question put at me that way. But I asked the question, and you gave me a fair answer." We never had any difficulty dealing, even when the topic of our conversation was the sort of thing that those on the receiving end don't like to hear. But they were always pleasant, always very courteous, as were all our dealings in that country.

Q: We're talking about the Reagan administration when you were there, whose approach to human rights was much more low key than that of the Carter administration. Did you find that Suriname was just so far off the political radar that nobody was paying any attention to it, or were there human rights abuses, people in jail or what have you, that we were pushing on, or anything of that nature?

BARBOUR: The situation got worse later on. In human rights policies the Reagan administration were less activists than during the Carter administration, but they were no less present. It was a significant element of our policy interests in Suriname to push for them. Later on in the latter years of our stay there, a small civil war developed, insurrection of a man, which generated a reaction inside Paramaribo, and in the countryside, troops would go in and there would be killings, and rampaging, and things like that by the army. We began to have more acute civil rights problems, and we began to talk openly about them. Then there were arrests, there were even killings, never objectively documented. Let's just say we were involved in doing what we could about them.

Q: What did we do?

BARBOUR: Well, in public and in private. And the nice thing about dealing with people like the Surinamese, you can say what you want to say. You can say what needs to be said, and so can they, and they don't get offended, you don't get offended. But I remember talking to the Prime Minister once about a column in one of the newspapers that was written by a local Protestant minister, a very witty column, very amusing, but telling in its barbs. The Prime Minister said, "Well, we're going to bring him in here." And I said, "Oh, that's fine. Let's see you'll have human rights, you'll have freedom of the press, and you'll have religious issues, all in one bundle. That's really great." He said, "Maybe we'll just give him a talking to." Anyhow, I think that sort of thing is called interventions, we had lots of interventions of that kind which really, if we succeeded in dampening down some of their intentions to take reprisals, they served our purpose. We also went public. I gave one local talk on it, I wrote a letter to the editor of the newspaper shortly before I left, and the issue was human rights. It was there, and it was a factor. Libyans came in. The military decided they didn't have any friends anywhere, they might as well have the Libyans, and of course, Qadhafi promised them all kinds of things. So he went to Tripoli, and the Libyans came and set up a-what did they call it-an Islamic Society, which was right down the street from my residence, and one of my new assignments, self assumed, was to get them out of there. And I had a lot of talks on the issue, I never succeeded in getting them out. But again, you could deal frankly with them. I would say to the Prime Minister, or the President, or the Foreign Minister, "Why don't you just throw them out, they're not doing you any good. They're coloring your image, nobody around here wants them. The Guianese don't want them here, the French don't want them here. Why don't you just throw them out?" They didn't, but at least you can't say that we didn't administer our points.

There was an internal security situation that came up once, and I called on the Surinamese commander about it. It concerned a Libyan trigger man who came into town. We knew it, we followed him around...

Q: A hit man, an assassin.

BARBOUR: ...a trigger man. We knew him, we knew when he came in, we knew he was, we knew he'd been around to look at the embassy. We had a good deal of interest in why he might be there. This was after the April attack on Tripoli, April 1984.

Q: When we bombed Tripoli.

BARBOUR: In reprisal for the night club bombing in Berlin. That's right. Shortly after that this fellow arrived. Mind you, I never had any instructions for dealing with the Surinamese. I had carte blanche to say whatever I thought needed to be said. So in this case I went to see Colonel (inaudible), and I said, "We know this man is here. We know who he is. We know that he was given a visa and was permitted to come in." And I said very pleasantly, "And I think you should know that if anything happens to any American here, you will be held responsible by my government." He didn't react really. I said, "But anyhow, here is his name." And I gave him the card on it. And that afternoon, I guess it was lunch time, I was home, and somebody dropped by to see me, and said, "He's leaving tomorrow at noon." Which was good. It was good in another way which has since become known in that we were able to follow him around, he was arrested in another country, and we got a whole suitcase of all his paraphernalia, and all his documents and things like that. So that was nice. But the point is not that we scored this counter intelligence coup, but the fact that we could talk to the Surinamese in that kind of manner without giving offense.

Q: In the first place, was there a difference did you find between the civilian side of the government, and the military side of the government?

BARBOUR: No, but there became a more difference later on. I will give you another little anecdote, a little revealing anecdote, and then I'll tell you about the difference. The relations with the military junta were officially chilly. Personally in a little place like Paramaribo, you run into everybody all the time. So, in fact, we talked to them. I've had some of them privately to lunch to talk to them. Relations were not bad. And we knew when they'd go off to Miami and have a weekend in Miami on the town, and come back. So we gave a visa to one of them, he went off to Miami with his girlfriend. And about 2:30 one morning, the Foreign Minister called me and said he had something urgent, and asked if I could go to see him. The Foreign Minister calls, you go, unless he makes a habit of calling at 2:30 in the morning. So I went to see him. And he said, "Can you tell me, Mr. Ambassador, why Captain (inaudible) has been arrested?" Captain (inaudible) was a member of junta, I hadn't the faintest notion. My first reaction was that he and his girlfriend were on the town and he'd gotten into a fight in a bar. And I said, "No, I haven't the faintest idea, I'm sure it's nothing political." So anyhow, I had no telegram, I had no information, I had no nothing, but during the course of the night I found out that he had been arrested in a DEA sting operation. Arrested, taped, filmed, and everything else. He had been the willing participant of a sting operation showing that he, as a member of the Surinamese junta, was willing to open up the country to drug trafficking. So it was all on tape as he negotiated prices, and entry points, and things like that.

But by the opening of business the next day, the morning newspaper and the radio all had scare stories about an American plot against Suriname. Little did they know, Suriname was not a country we had ever plotted against, but the CIA was involved, and the Americans were all against Suriname, and they were even hinting of big demonstrations, and stir up the people. So at that point too I went around to see Colonel (inaudible), and at the end of the morning he agreed to receive me. We talked about it and I gave him the information.

Q: You got the information from?

BARBOUR: By phone, scarce as it was, and I gave it to him and I said, "Now what I want you to know is that we only know what we know, and it concerns Capt. (inaudible). And this campaign that is being stirred up, all these allegations, the excitement, really doesn't do anybody any good because at this point we only know what we know." Meaning we don't know anything about anybody else. And the Colonel, who was no fool, got the point 100%, and without batting an eye, "Oh, well, in this case the Foreign Minister is not speaking for the government." And that was the end of it. The afternoon newspaper, evening television, nada. It was a minor affair. I went that afternoon when I went to play tennis, I was a national hero because the civilian elements of the country, in or out of government...in government worked with the military either under duress, out of fear, or because they made a lot of money on the side. Outside the government the civilian element hated the military, but tolerated it. But we were careful not to seem opposed or any threat and you had this element of forces who existed there, co-existed, and until this little civil war started, co-existing with amazing congeniality.

But when we were there I would add on a personal note, one could travel all over the country, and Suriname at that time was 99% virgin Amazonian jungle.

Q: Did we see the Soviets and the Chinese doing anything there that we considered...

BARBOUR: I could never figure out why the Soviets were there, except I guess they were sucked in on the coattails of Castro, and Bishop. The Soviet ambassador was, I think, basically a well-intentioned person. His wife made no bones at all about her feelings toward the regime at home. She was quite outspoken, and spent as little time in Suriname with her husband as possible, was therefore a pleasure to be around when she was there. The Chinese were there, I think, because they had a sense of mission. They'd built a lovely sports complex in the Chinese fashion. They said, "Which would you like to have? A stadium, airport terminal, or the various things they have in their catalogue. The Surinamese chose a stadium, which is a large complex. The Chinese said, "Let's see, this is July 1, 1981, it'll take 18 months, and we'll let you know what we need." In Chinese fashion doing things in a country like Suriname, they need very little. Everything and everybody is important except the basic laborer, and they delivered it on time, just as they said using Chinese workers, Chinese engineers, Chinese design, Chinese raw materials, Chinese prefabricated materials, and that was that. So why they were there, I never figured out.

Q: Were there, say American missionaries, or any people like this?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: My experience in Korea somewhat about the same time was that when you had a government that was essentially repressive, our missionaries very quickly find themselves at odds with them because they're supporting their laity who are usually being oppressed. Was this a problem?

BARBOUR: The missionaries there kept out of politics entirely. They had their feelings, of course, but they were totally apolitical. The Surinamese church, Dutch Reform, Mennonite, much more active. There is a kind of national church in Suriname, and it is the Dutch church. As I said, one of their ministers wrote a newspaper column, his wife worked in the embassy which occasionally made it inconvenient. The head of the church, the pastor, gave delightful sermons, full of innuendo, lots of little asides that must have made the military squirm, but they would sometimes go as dutiful churchgoers, would sit in the audience and find all this acceptable within the limits of the conviviality that reigned in Suriname.

Q: Did Suriname ever get onto the agenda of our Congress and saying we've got to be more beastly to the Surinamese?

BARBOUR: No, Suriname was essentially off our screen, that's the reason I never got any instructions. It was an idyllic life in some ways for an ambassador, and as I said, I could make such representations as I felt the situation called for, and report them afterwards.

Q: Was Castro's stake pretty well gone by this time?

BARBOUR: They had lost interest in Castro. They saw that Cuba was no model for them to follow, and they very pragmatically decided not to pursue it. They maintained an embassy there, there was no Cuban embassy Paramaribo. No, they did not, they had lost interest in Castro.

Q: Did you get any reflections from our moving into Granada in '82?

BARBOUR: That was before my time.

Q: If things really get bad, and a country turns septic, the United States is not only able, but willing to...

BARBOUR: Your question reveals you know a lot more about this subject than you would think. It was given far more credit than it deserved. There was always the possibility, and I guess the conviction in the circumstances you just described, the Americans might indeed come charging in some day, who knows. They didn't realize how unimportant Suriname was to us.

Q: In interviewing one of your predecessors, apparently we did take a look at it when it looked like Cuba might be expanding, Granada was bad, and the sum total was after taking a long hard look, sure we could probably send a battalion in and do a number, but then what? and there we are. And is it worth it? And the answer came back, no. Granada served as a certain sign saying things can go just so far, and the United States can do something.

BARBOUR: It did in attitudes.

Q: Was Suriname on our blacklist? I'm talking about exchanges, sort of the stock in trade of what the United States does, cultural, shows, etc.

With Suriname did we have exchange programs, and cultural shows, and this sort of thing?

BARBOUR: What we had was very small anyway in objective terms. We did have an USIS operation. We did an IVP, an International Visitors Program, I think we had six or eight a year of visitors we sent to the United States, obviously chosen to further the causes that we were supporting there, democratization and human rights and things like that, as well as occasionally technical grants. They were all very effective. We didn't have cultural presentations, I think we were simply not on the circuit for those. We had an occasional speaker. No, it was not entirely off the screen, it was just too far down on the list of priorities to merit much.

Q: By the time you left had the civil war was going, did we have any particular interest or concern about the civil war one way or the other?

BARBOUR: At that time we were concerned by its implications. The army reacted very harshly. Just before it broke out we had been authorized to offer a small IMET program, International Military Education and Training, and to that end we had offered an English language laboratory which included when it was assembled some instructors in training programs, and things like that. That was a big change. I had offered it to Barza, and he had leaped at it with alacrity, and this at a time when the military were slowly withdrawing from political life and letting the civilian government act more and more on its own. The trend was somewhat encouraging. Anyhow, the first thing we did was cancel that program. Our interests were really to keep out of it. They hired an American helicopter, they chartered it with a couple of soldiers of fortune on board. They brought it over from, I think, down through French Guinea, brought it in the back door, brought it into action against Brunswick, and then the first day of operation it was shot down. Therefore, there ended American involvement.

Q: Did you have American mercenaries?

BARBOUR: We did. One was killed in the crash, the other was injured and was hospitalized-the French got involved and one of the men got killed. Anyhow, one or both were hospitalized for a while. They were working for the government, the military, and no reason for the Surinamese to be unkind to them. So, no, we did not have a problem. The military Attaché saw them a couple of times and that was that. They didn't want to have anything to do with us, and we were quite happy when they left.

Q: Did the civil war have any connotations. I mean, were there good guys and bad guys?

BARBOUR: Not really. The Dutch were, I think, unofficially backing the rebels. There were Dutch soldiers of fortune involved. It was all a micro-war, the number of people involved never more than a couple of hundred on each side. A big operation would be a couple of hundred people on both sides. But it was in the jungle. Unfortunately they blew up the bridges to French Guinea, and they cut down power lines, and they did unfortunate things. And the situation in the capital, Paramaribo, needless to say got rather tense from time to time. There were rumors of eruptions into the city, but they didn't take place. We became more concerned about you might say law and order in the city, but in fact we never had any reason to feel injured by the situation.

Q: Then you left there in '87.

BARBOUR: October, '87.

Q: As you went what was your impression of whither Suriname?

BARBOUR: It was going downhill, had been going downhill economically ever since the little war started which is probably about a year, and therefore had been going downhill politically. There were political tensions between the military and the civilians had increased including between the military and the civilian government. And then the military had agreed that there could be elections. These elections were free and open. There was a large coalition against the military. The military ran as a party, that is they and their supporters ran as a party. There was a coalition party of, you might say, the Creoles and the Hindustanis, the Indians, you might say the commercial and the white collar elements, it was a big alliance. The campaign was open. The coalition had a very catchy campaign song, it was charming. And, of course, they triumphed. They got 82-83 percent of the vote. I left just before the vote. I decided I would not stay through the voting. My successor was due to follow and I thought this is a good time to break. But they got that overwhelming percentage. And I left then personally on a note of hope that a new political scenario was being created, that this new coalition would take over with a civilian government, with real political backing, and it would gradually impose itself vis-a-vis the military. Well, unfortunately it didn't gradually impose itself, or if it did, it did so with such gentleness that it was hard to see it. Corruption increased, drug trafficking began. This little insurgent army in the bush itself got involved in the country and things became much worse in the country. I ended on a good note but it was not justified.

Q: So what did you do when you came back?

BARBOUR: I went to Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia as you might say, officially a Diplomat in Residence. In fact, as a foreign affairs adviser to a special program of 20 students that had been created within the university. I had not been keen on going there, but they told me, they being here at FSI, that Marshall University had put together with private funds what they hoped would turn out to be a mini-Rhodes Scholar program endorsed by General Chuck Yeager, given his name, Yeager Scholars Foundation with 20 scholars rigorously selected. And they hoped very much they could have a Diplomat in Residence. It sounded interesting in that context. What they wanted was someone with the title of ambassador to give the program some eclat. I knew that. They telephoned me several times in Suriname, some of the boosters, calling to encourage, to urge, to incite my interest in the program. And I remember one conversation by a local businessman who said, "What kind of sports do you play?" "Well, you know, here it's basketball, then football, we'll get you some tickets to the football games." "What kind of sports do you play?" And I said, "My wife and I play tennis." "Well, we'll get you membership to the Country Club," which they did. "We'll give you a house," which they did. And then he said, "Do you need a car?" And I said, "No, we'll have a car." But it was in that kind of atmosphere that we went. Huntington, West Virginia, a small city, western hub of railroads in the 19th century named after Mr. Huntington who developed, I think, the Western Pacific.

Q: The Huntington Library, the Huntington Elementary School in Paso San Reno, California. He was one of the robber barons of ...

BARBOUR: Indeed, he was. Well, he endowed Marshall University, what became Marshall University, or contributed heavily to it, and to a lot of other good things there. He got the city named after him. And off I went to Huntington, West Virginia. The railroad yard is still a parking lot for a lot of private railroad cars among other things. Very much Appalachia. A part of the United States that neither my wife and I had ever been exposed to, interesting enough but very sad. Very much on the economic downturn. When we were there the population of the city was about 15,000 less than it had been some years before, and even then stores were closing, factories were shutting down, people were moving away. Very sad, and it happened while we were there. Main Street was closing up. But I must say, such wonderful people. You could go, you could leave your car unparked, you didn't need to worry about locking your front door, if you forgot it, nothing would happen to it. If you ordered something from a store and you weren't going to be there to receive it, "we'll leave it on the front porch"-all houses there have front porches, and swings. It was a nice atmosphere.

Foreign affairs is not high on the Marshall University list of priorities, so after installing ourselves in the university, we were left to develop our own program. Now, in many universities it consists of teaching regularly and giving rarefied lectures on some aspects of foreign affairs. Well, that wasn't what people there wanted to hear. I gave some lectures on international law. I took a class while a professor was away. I gave foreign affairs lectures, some of the international relations courses at nearby universities and colleges, the Rotary Club, or the Kiwanis Club, clubs of Huntington, and nearby towns. What they really wanted was about the Foreign Service. And I found them interested in the Foreign Service, and unbelievably sympathetic in people to the institution. I was amazed. But those were the questions they asked, not about how did we do it, what did we think about perestroika, what was the American reaction to glasnost. No, they wanted to know what life in the Foreign Service was like. They were very congenial, very pleasant. I had the nicest office I ever had anyplace. But it was clear that one term was really about all they needed there. They had had their title, and I therefore agreed to come back and be an inspector. I had hoped to go back to Europe, but that fell through for you might say the reasons one learns to live with. And I came back and became an inspector where I have unretired and now retired and been ever since.

Q: So this was from 1988 to the present?

BARBOUR: As an inspector. I came back in April of 1988, went off with a colleague to understudy him for a week in Copenhagen, and then took my own team off and did my first two inspections which fortunately, and no doubt by design, were very easy.

Q: Since this covers a vast thing, but I would like to get a feel before we end this...here you were a long-time veteran of the Foreign Service, how did you find when you came in, because there had been some tremendous changes in '88, can you characterize your view of the inspections at that time, and the atmosphere, and attitude?

BARBOUR: Sherman Funk was the Inspector General. He brought with him a new team. He vastly enlarged the office of the Inspector General, creating an office of investigations, doing work that had formerly been done by SY or DS, creating an office of audits to do program audits, and giving unintentionally to the inspection function a benevolent cast causing us to be seen, I think, certainly in the first years of his Inspector Generalship, an atmosphere that we were in fact like the investigators that to our purpose was to catch people doing wrong, and punish them for it. In other words, the changeover when Bill Harrop left and Helms put in the stipulation that the Inspector General could not be a member of the Foreign Service. The legislation that gave him more power to increase in the inspectorial bureaucracy, all I think had a chilling effect initially on relations between the Foreign Service and the inspection institution. That had worn off to some extent in the year that elapsed between its beginning and my entry onto the scene. Certainly that point of view was not that of the people who were inspecting. At that time there was also taking place something which was more difficult to digest and that was the addition of Civil Service inspectors, including at somewhat senior levels. That was more difficult and caused a lot more suspicion. But the inspection itself had not really changed from what it had been, and that is an in-house look at how an embassy goes about carrying out its foreign policy obligations, and using the money and people that are made available to carry out its foreign policy obligations. That hadn't changed. Nor had the attitude changed. In fact, to me it was quite clear that we really saw ourselves, my colleagues as I entered new onto the scene, saw themselves as management consultants. Our purpose was not to catch people doing wrong. Our purpose was to correct errors if we found any. But to be a team that went out and gave a disinterested, but I insist, in-house look at this particular institution of a post, or a bureau, and give it our reaction. Now obviously the reaction frequently contains things that an ambassador or an assistant secretary doesn't want to hear. But they were, in fact, well intended. That has changed somewhat over the past couple of years, not in the psychology, but in the purpose as things in the Department have gotten tougher. Especially now teams are not enjoined, but feel much more obliged to identify savings and things like that. That was always an element, but you didn't go saying, "This is embassy X, let's see if we can't reduce it by ten positions." Posts frequently assumed we went with that mandate, but it wasn't true at all. If we could find places where there could be reductions, we recommended them. Or if we found there were places where increases were needed, we recommended them too. I think things are a little more difficult now because everybody, both the inspection process and inspection institution, and the inspected entities, are going through a rather tough period. Nonetheless, we continue to look upon ourselves mostly as consultants with the purpose of helping the thing, the inspector entity, do its job better.

My experience has been that let's say 80 percent of the time, the posts are glad we have been there, after we're gone they're glad, because we are a kind of a pain in the neck while we're there. But after we've gone, I think, they're glad that we've come. And it's ironic, one of the complaints that the new Inspector General has received since he's been there, is that the inspections are too infrequent. They are slipping into four and five years now. We do think that we're a friend of the post. I sometimes use the analogy of a physical examination. You'd really not have it but you know you've got to have it, and you want people to tell you the truth.

Q: It used to be in the old days when the inspectors arrived, it was often the saving grace for junior officers because the inspectors could give a little different aspect. If you had a senior rating officer who was not well disposed, and maybe...

BARBOUR: You still have that option. Again, we write inspector's evaluations, we write an evaluation of an ambassador, and the DCM, the chief of mission, all principal officers and assistant secretaries and deputies. We can also write evaluations on anyone if they are corrective because we find they're not doing the good job that was described in the evaluation, or in fact that the evaluation is unfair. And we write both kinds.

Q: One of the things that struck me looking at this since I retired is, this huge audit organization, huge compared with what we used to have, and if you have something like this, this is an animal that has to be fed. The State Department per se, it's real money, but it's not a money intensive organization compared to many other organizations and it doesn't look to me like the audit people might be...

BARBOUR: Well, the audit function...we do spend a lot of money, we don't spend it on salaries and expenses, but we do spend a lot of money. The Department of State appropriation that they talk about is a lot of money, and it does include programs which we didn't used to have. The audits are programs. They will look at a function, and they do audits of some INM and narcotics programs, which are operational and spend a lot of money. They will look at the visa function. We don't look at the visa function except in the context of a particular post. They will look at the function world-wide. They will look at allowances, the allowance program, how it's organized, how it's administered. They did one on voucher processing, which I hope is going to lead to some great simplification. So they do programs. We don't do programs, and one of the things we stress is that we're not auditors, and we're not investigators. We are the same old garden variety inspector that most people in the Service have grown up with.

Q: Do you have any good inspection stories? Horror stories, good stories, what have you?

BARBOUR: Well, I'll give you, without identities, things where I think we have done some very good things. There was one post that was a beneficiary of unappropriated money. And it tried with, I think, sincerity, to spend them correctly in pursuit of foreign policy operations. But in doing so it had over time dug itself into some enormous holes, some of which were becoming very doubtful. Well, we spent a lot of time with that place, and I think we helped it get right with the regulations and prevented it from getting itself, itself being the people involved starting with the head of the post, the chief of mission, from getting himself into some circumstances that could have been extremely awkward with the GAO, and maybe even with the legislation. We did that.

Another place we found that a chief of mission was...well, was beating up on his staff. We did a special inspection of that post for the specific purpose of finding out what the problems were, and spending long hours with him as to how it was not to his advantage to continue to behave as he had been behaving. I think we got a good hearing.

We saw posts that had gone off the tracks as far as its purpose in life. The chief of mission, a very nice fellow, had no idea what he was there to do. We got him some policy directives that he did not have, and we worked with him to help carry out foreign policy. I think we did some good there.

These are isolated very vague examples. We don't go into a place and say, "Okay, everybody line up, we're here, we're going to straighten this place out." Because we realize that in most embassies everybody is slugging away in good will, doing the best they can, sometimes under very difficult circumstances. And we go back to what I said earlier, we go in with the hope that we can be of assistance to them in doing their jobs.

Q: What is your impression of the use of the patronage system to appoint political ambassadors? I mean some ambassadors might be called political ambassadors, but they come with credentials that are such that they can move right in. But there are a good number of ambassadors who come in as political appointees who come from completely different environment. One of the things must have been the problem of the fit between these and your career Foreign Service.

BARBOUR: I don't know how many posts I've inspected over the past three years, and preceding experiences, I have the very distinct impression that most political ambassadors do no harm. A few are good, are serious about really pursuing the given foreign policy objectives, not the ones they prefer to operate in. But the real foreign policy objectives, they are responsive, they are disciplined, and they pursue them either with innate ability, or as you indicate, some acquired professionalism for whatever reason. And they do have some that are just plain bad. They become embarrassments. This is a small percentage. They become embarrassments, frequently untouchable though. They decide that what they are really there to do is not what their instructions or whatever the Department of State tells them, but what the White House wants which may be...and this which of course sounds great, but may not be our real interest in that country, or certainly not the principal interest, when they have other things. And our principal interest is always national security, we may have national security interests that really should come first, and they decide for whatever reasons, no. This is a small percentage. Some are bad, some are good, most do no harm. A political chief of mission is usually better than a professional Foreign Service officer in public diplomacy.

Q: That's what I've often heard.

BARBOUR: ...for whatever reasons.

Q: All right Bob, should we call it at this point?

BARBOUR: Yes.

Q: Very good. I thank you very much.

End of interview